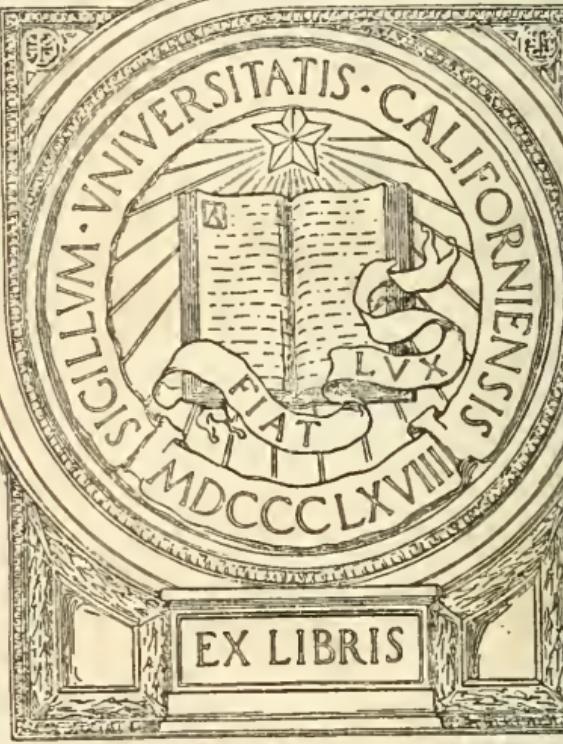
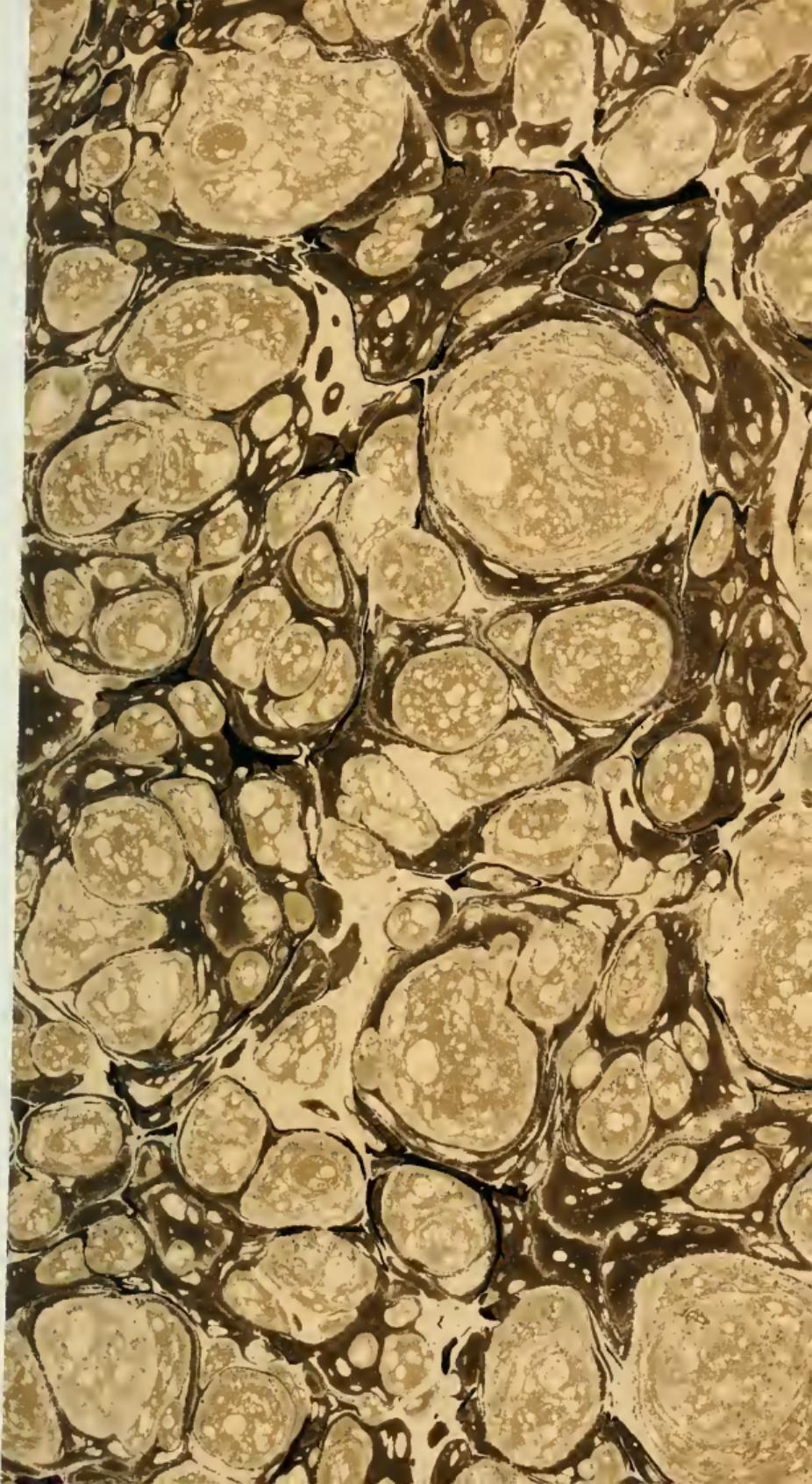


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HOMER'S ILIAD, VOL. II.

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CHISWICK:

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# ILIAS OF HOMER.

TRANSLATED BY

ALEXANDER POPE.

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VOL. II.

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# THE ILIAD.

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## BOOK XII.

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### The Argument.

#### THE BATTLE AT THE GRECIAN WALL.

The Greeks being retired into their intrenchments, Hector attempts to force them; but it proving impossible to pass the ditch, Polydamas advises to quit their chariots, and manage the attack on foot. The Trojans follow his counsel; and having divided their army into five bodies of foot, begin the assault. But upon the signal of an eagle with a serpent in his talons, which appeared on the left hand of the Trojans, Polydamas endeavours to withdraw them again. This Hector opposes, and continues the attack: in which, after many actions, Sarpedon makes the first breach in the wall: Hector also, casting a stone of a vast size, forces open one of the gates, and enters at the head of his troops, who victoriously pursue the Grecians even to their ships.

---

WHILE thus the hero's pious cares attend  
The cure and safety of his wounded friend,  
Trojans and Greeks with clashing shields engage,  
And mutual deaths are dealt with mutual rage.  
Nor long the trench or lofty walls oppose;  
With gods averse the ill-fated works arose;  
Their powers neglected, and no victim slain,  
The walls were raised, the trenches sunk, in vain.

Without the gods, how short a period stands  
The proudest monument of mortal hands !  
This stood while Hector and Achilles raged,  
While sacred Troy the warring hosts engaged ;  
But when her sons were slain, her city burn'd,  
And what survived of Greece to Greece return'd ;  
Then Neptune and Apollo shook the shore,  
Then Ida's summits pour'd their watery store ;  
Rhesus and Rhodius then unite their rills,  
Caresus roaring down the stony hills,  
Æsepus, Granicus, with mingled force,  
And Xanthus foaming from his fruitful source ;  
And gulfy Simoës, rolling to the main  
Helmets, and shields, and godlike heroes slain :  
These, turn'd by Phœbus from their wonted ways,  
Deluged the rampire nine continual days ;  
The weight of waters saps the yielding wall,  
And to the sea the floating bulwarks fall.  
Incessant cataracts the thunderer pours,  
And half the skies descend in slinicy showers.  
The god of ocean, marching stern before,  
With his huge trident wounds the trembling shore,  
Vast stones and piles from their foundation heaves,  
And whelms the smoky ruin in the waves.  
Now smooth'd with sand, and level'd by the  
flood,  
No fragment tells where once the wonder stood ;  
In their old bounds the rivers roll again,  
Shine 'twixt the hills, or wander o'er the plain.

But this the gods in later times perform ;  
As yet the bulwark stood, and braved the storm ;  
The strokes yet echoed of contending powers ;  
War thunder'd at the gates, and blood distain'd  
the towers.

Smote by the arm of Jove, and dire dismay,  
Close by their hollow ships the Grecians lay ;  
Hector's approach in every wind they hear,  
And Hector's fury every moment fear.

He, like a whirlwind, toss'd the scattering throng,  
Mingled the troops, and drove the field along.  
So midst the dogs and hunter's daring bands,  
Fierce of his might, a boar or lion stands ;  
Arm'd foes around a dreadful circle form,  
And hissing javelins rain an iron storm :  
His powers untamed their bold assault defy,  
And where he turns, the rout disperse, or die :  
He foams, he glares, he bounds against them all,  
And if he falls, his courage makes him fall.

With equal rage encompass'd Hector glows ;  
Exhorts his armies, and the trenches shows.  
The panting steeds impatient fury breathe,  
But snort and tremble at the gulf beneath ;  
Just on the brink they neigh, and paw the ground,  
And the turf trembles, and the skies resound.  
Eager they view'd the prospect dark and deep,  
Vast was the leap, and headlong hung the steep ;  
The bottom bare (a formidable show !)  
And bristled thick with sharpen'd stakes below.  
The foot alone this strong defence could force,  
And try the pass impervious to the horse.  
This saw Polydamas ; who, wisely-brave,  
Restrain'd great Hector, and this counsel gave—

‘ O thou ! bold leader of the Trojan bands,  
And you, confederate chiefs from foreign lands !  
What entrance here can cumbrous chariots find,  
The stakes beneath, the Grecian walls behind ?  
No pass through those without a thousand wounds,  
No space for combat in yon narrow bounds.

Proud of the favours mighty Jove has shown,  
On certain dangers we too rashly run :  
If 'tis his will our haughty foes to tame,  
O may this instant end the Grecian name !  
Here, far from Argos, let their heroes fall,  
And one great day destroy and bury all !  
But should they turn, and here oppress our train,  
What hopes, what methods of retreat remain ?  
Wedged in the trench, by our own troops confused,  
In one promiscuous carnage crush'd and bruised ;  
All Troy must perish, if their arms prevail,  
Nor shall a Trojan live to tell the tale.  
Hear then, ye warriors ! and obey with speed ;  
Back from the trenches let your steeds be led ;  
Then all alighting, wedged in firm array,  
Proceed on foot, and Hector lead the way.  
So Greece shall stoop before our conquering  
power,

And this (if Jove consent) her fatal hour.'

This counsel pleased : the godlike Hector sprung  
Swift from his seat ; his clanging armour rung.  
The chief's example follow'd by his train,  
Each quits his car, and issues on the plain.  
By orders strict the charioteers enjoin'd,  
Compel the coursers to their ranks behind.  
The forces part in five distinguish'd bands,  
And all obey their several chiefs' commands.  
The best and bravest in the first conspire,  
Pant for the fight, and threat the fleet with fire :  
Great Hector glorious in the van of these,  
Polydamas, and brave Cebriones.  
Before the next the graceful Paris shines,  
And bold Alcathous, and Agenor joins.  
The sons of Priam with the third appear,  
Deiphobus, and Helenus the seer ;

In arms with these the mighty Asius stood,  
Who drew from Hyrtacus his noble blood,  
And whom Arisba's yellow coursers bore,  
The coursers fed on Selle's winding shore.  
Antenor's sons the fourth battalion guide,  
And great Æneas born on fountful Ide.  
Divine Sarpedon the last band obey'd,  
Whom Glaucus and Asteropæus aid.  
Next him, the bravest, at their army's head,  
But he more brave than all the hosts he led.

Now with compacted shields in close array  
The moving legions speed their headlong way :  
Already in their hopes they fire the fleet,  
And see the Grecians gasping at their feet.

While every Trojan thus, and every aid,  
The' advice of wise Polydamas obey'd,  
Asius alone, confiding in his car,  
His vaunted coursers urged to meet the war.  
Unhappy hero ! and advised in vain !  
Those wheels returning ne'er shall mark the plain ;  
No more those coursers with triumphant joy  
Restore their master to the gates of Troy !  
Black death attends behind the Grecian wall,  
And great Idomeneus shall boast thy fall !  
Fierce to the left he drives, where from the plain  
The flying Grecians strove their ships to gain ;  
Swift through the wall their horse and chariots  
pass'd,  
The gates half-open'd to receive the last.  
Thither, exulting in his force, he flies :  
His following host with clamours rend the skies ;  
To plunge the Grecians headlong in the main,  
Such their proud hopes, but all their hopes were  
vain !

To guard the gates, two mighty chiefs attend,  
Who from the Lapiths' warlike race descend;  
This Polypoetes, great Perithoüs' heir,  
And that Leonteus, like the god of war.  
As two tall oaks, before the wall they rise;  
Their roots in earth, their heads amidst the skies:  
Whose spreading arms, with leafy honours  
crown'd,  
Forbid the tempest, and protect the ground;  
High on the hills appears their stately form,  
And their deep roots for ever brave the storm.  
So graceful these, and so the shock they stand  
Of raging Asius, and his furious band.  
Orestes, Acamus, in front appear,  
And Oenomaus and Thoön close the rear:  
In vain their clamours shake their ambient fields,  
In vain around them beat the hollow shields;  
The fearless brothers on the Grecians call,  
To guard their navies, and defend the wall.  
E'en when they saw Troy's sable troops impend,  
And Greece tumultuous from her towers descend,  
Forth from the portals rush'd the intrepid pair,  
Opposed their breasts, and stood themselves the  
war.  
So two wild boars spring furious from their den,  
Roused with the cries of dogs and voice of men;  
On every side the crackling trees they tear,  
And root the shrubs, and lay the forest bare;  
They gnash their tusks, with fire their eyeballs roll,  
Till some wide wound lets out their mighty soul.  
Around their heads the whistling javelins sung,  
With sounding strokes their brazen targets rung;  
Fierce was the fight, while yet the Grecian powers  
Maintain'd the walls, and mann'd the lofty towers:

To save the fleet, their last efforts they try,  
And stones and darts in mingled tempests fly.

As when sharp Boreas blows abroad, and brings  
The dreary winter on his frozen wings ;  
Beneath the low-hung clouds the sheets of snow  
Descend, and whiten all the fields below ;  
So fast the darts on either army pour,  
So down the rampires rolls the rocky shower :  
Heavy, and thick, resound the batter'd shields,  
And the deaf echo rattles round the fields.

With shame repulsed, with grief and fury driven,  
The frantic Asius thus accuses heaven :  
' In powers immortal who shall now believe ?  
Can those too flatter, and can Jove deceive ?  
What man could doubt but Troy's victorious power  
Should humble Greece, and this her fatal hour ?  
But like when wasps from hollow crannies drive,  
To guard the entrance of their common hive,  
Darkening the rock, while with unwearied wings  
They strike the assailants, and infix their stings ;  
A race determined, that to death contend ;  
So fierce these Greeks their last retreats defend.  
Gods ! shall two warriors only guard their gates,  
Repel an army, and defraud the fates ?'

These empty accents mingled with the wind,  
Nor moved great Jove's unalterable mind ;  
To godlike Hector and his matchless might  
Was owed the glory of the destined fight.  
Like deeds of arms through all the forts were tried,  
And all the gates sustain'd an equal tide ;  
Through the long walls the stony showers were  
heard,  
The blaze of flames, the flash of arms appear'd.  
The spirit of a god my breast inspire,  
To raise each act to life, and sing with fire !

While Greece unconquer'd kept alive the war,  
Secure of death, confiding in despair;  
And all her guardian gods, in deep dismay,  
With unassisting arms deplored the day.

E'en yet the dauntless Lapithæ maintain  
The dreadful pass, and round them heap the slain.  
First Damasus, by Polypœtes' steel,  
Pierced through his helmet's brazen vizor, fell;  
The weapon drank the mingled brains and gore!  
The warrior sinks, tremendous now no more!  
Next Ormenus and Pylon yield their breath:  
Nor less Leonteus strows the field with death;  
First through the belt Hippomachus he gored,  
Then sudden waved his unresisted sword:  
Antiphates, as through the ranks he broke,  
The falchion struck, and fate pursued the stroke;  
Iämenus, Orestes, Menon, bled;  
And round him rose a monument of dead.

Meantime, the bravest of the Trojan crew,  
Bold Hector and Polydamas, pursue;  
Fierce with impatience on the works to fall,  
And wrap in rolling flames the fleet and wall.  
These on the further bank now stood and gazed,  
By Heaven alarm'd, by prodigies amazed:  
A signal omen stopp'd the passing host,  
Their martial fury in their wonder lost.  
Jove's bird on sounding pinions beat the skies;  
A bleeding serpent of enormous size  
His talons truss'd; alive, and curling round,  
He stung the bird, whose throat received the  
wound:  
Mad with the smart, he drops the fatal prey,  
In airy circles wings his painful way,  
Floats on the winds, and rends the heaven with  
Amidst the host the fallen serpent lies. [cries:

They, pale with terror, mark its spires unroll'd,  
And Jove's portent with beating hearts behold.  
Then first Polydamas the silence broke,  
Long weigh'd the signal, and to Hector spoke—

‘ How oft, my brother, thy reproach I bear,  
For words well-meant, and sentiments sincere !  
True to those counsels which I judge the best,  
I tell the faithful dictates of my breast.

To speak his thoughts is every freeman's right,  
In peace and war, in council and in fight;  
And all I move, deferring to thy sway,  
But tends to raise that power which I obey.  
Then hear my words, nor may my words be vain :  
Seek not, this day, the Grecian ships to gain ;  
For sure to warn us Jove his omen sent,  
And thus my mind explains its clear event :

The victor eagle, whose sinister flight  
Retards our host, and fills our hearts with fright,  
Dismiss'd his conquest in the middle skies,  
Allow'd to seize, but not possess, the prize ;  
Thus though we gird with fires the Grecian fleet,  
Though these proud bulwarks tumble at our feet,  
Toils unforeseen, and fiercer, are decreed ;  
More woes shall follow, and more heroes bleed.  
So bodes my soul, and bids me thus advise ;  
For thus a skilful seer would read the skies.’

To him then Hector with disdain return'd—  
(Fierce as he spoke, his eyes with fury burn'd)  
‘ Are these the faithful counsels of thy tongue ?  
Thy will is partial, not thy reason wrong :  
Of if the purpose of thy heart thou vent,  
Sure Heaven resumes the little sense it lent.  
What coward counsels would thy madness move  
Against the word, the will reveal'd, of Jove ?

The leading sign, the' irrevocable nod,  
And happy thunders of the favouring god,  
These shall I slight? and guide my wavering mind  
By wandering birds, that flit with every wind?  
Ye vagrants of the sky! your wings extend,  
Or where the suns arise, or where descend;  
To right, to left, unheeded take your way,  
While I the dictates of high Heaven obey.  
Without a sign his sword the brave man draws,  
And asks no omen but his country's cause.  
But why shouldst thou suspect the war's success?  
None fears it more, as none promotes it less:  
Though all our chiefs amidst yon ships expire,  
Trust thy own cowardice to' escape their fire.  
Troy and her sons may find a general grave,  
But thou canst live, for thou canst be a slave.  
Yet should the fears that wary mind suggests  
Spread their cold poison through our soldiers.  
My javelin can revenge so base a part [breasts,  
And free the soul that quivers in thy heart.'

Furions he spoke, and, rushing to the wall,  
Calls on his host; his host obey the call;  
With ardour follow where their leader flies:  
Redoubling clamours thunder in the skies.  
Jove breathes a whirlwind from the hills of Ide,  
And drifts of dust the clouded navy hide:  
He fills the Greeks with terror and dismay,  
And gives great Hector the predestined day.  
Strong in themselves, but stronger in their aid,  
Close to the works their rigid siege they laid.  
In vain the mounds and massy beams defend,  
While these they undermine, and those they reud;  
Upheave the piles that prop the solid wall;  
And heaps on heaps the smoky ruins fall.

Greece on her ramparts stands the fierce alarms ;  
The crowded bulwarks blaze with waving arms,  
Shield touching shield, a long resplendent row ;  
Whence hissing darts, incessant, rain below.  
The bold *Ajaces* fly from tower to tower,  
And rouse, with flame divine, the Grecian power.  
The generous impulse every Greek obeys ;  
Threats urge the fearful ; and the valiant, praise.

‘ Fellows in arms ! whose deeds are known to fame,

And you whose ardour hopes an equal name !  
Since not alike endued with force or art ;  
Behold a day when each may act his part !  
A day to fire the brave, and warm the cold,  
To gain new glories, or augment the old.  
Urge those who stand ; and those who faint excite ;  
Drown *Hector*’s vaunts in loud exorts of fight ;  
Conquest, not safety, fill the thoughts of all ;  
Seek not your fleet, but sally from the wall ;  
So *Jove* once more may drive their routed train,  
And *Troy* lie trembling in her walls again.’

Their ardour kindles all the Grecian powers ;  
And now the stones descend in heavier showers.  
As when high *Jove* his sharp artillery forms,  
And opes his cloudy magazine of storms ;  
In winter’s bleak uncomfortable reign,  
A snowy inundation hides the plain ;  
He stills the winds, and bids the skies to sleep,  
Then pours the silent tempest, thick and deep ;  
And first the mountain-tops are cover’d o’er,  
Then the green fields, and then the sandy shore ;  
Bent with the weight the nodding woods are seen,  
And one bright waste hides all the works of men ;  
The circling seas, alone absorbing all,  
Drink the dissolving fleeces as they fall ;

So from each side increased the stony rain,  
And the white ruin rises o'er the plain.

Thus godlike Hector and his troops contend  
To force the ramparts, and the gates to rend:  
Nor Troy could conquer, nor the Greeks would  
yield,

Till great Sarpedon tower'd amid the field;  
For mighty Jove inspired with martial flame  
His matchless son, and urged him on to fame.  
In arms he shines, conspicuous from afar,  
And bears aloft his ample shield in air;  
Within whose orb the thick bull-hides were roll'd,  
Ponderous with brass, and bound with ductile  
gold:

And while two pointed javelins arm his hands,  
Majestic moves along, and leads his Lycian bands.

So, press'd with hunger from the mountain's  
Descends a lion on the flocks below; [brow  
So stalks the lordly savage o'er the plain,  
In sullen majesty and stern disdain:  
In vain loud mastiffs bay him from afar,  
And shepherds gall him with an iron war;  
Regardless, furious, he pursues his way;  
He foams, he roars, he rends the panting prey.

Resolved alike, divine Sarpedon glows  
With generous rage that drives him on the foes.  
He views the towers, and meditates their fall,  
To sure destruction dooms the' aspiring wall;  
Then casting on his friend an ardent look,  
Fired with the thirst of glory, thus he spoke—

‘ Why boast we, Glaucus! our extended reign  
Where Xanthus' streams enrich the Lycian plain,  
Our numerous herds that range the fruitful field,  
And hills where vines their purple harvest yield,

Our foaming bowls with purer nectar crown'd,  
Our feasts enhanced with music's sprightly sound?  
Why on those shores are we with joy survey'd,  
Admired as heroes, and as gods obey'd?  
Unless great acts superior merit prove,  
And vindicate the bounteous powers above.  
'Tis ours, the dignity they give, to grace;  
The first in valour, as the first in place;  
That when with wondering eyes our martial bands  
Behold our deeds transcending our commands,  
Such, they may cry, deserve the sovereign state,  
Whom those that envy dare not imitate!  
Could all our care elude the gloomy grave,  
Which claims no less the fearful than the brave,  
For lust of fame I should not vainly dare  
In fighting fields, nor urge thy soul to war.  
But since, alas! ignoble age must come,  
Disease, and death's inexorable doom,  
The life, which others pay, let us bestow,  
And give to fame what we to nature owe;  
Brave though we fall, and honour'd if we live,  
Or let us glory gain, or glory give!'

He said; his words the listening chief inspire  
With equal warmth, and rouse the warrior's fire;  
The troops pursue their leaders with delight,  
Rush to the foe, and claim the promised fight.  
Menestheus from on high the storm beheld  
Threatening the fort, and blackening in the field:  
Around the walls he gazed, to view from far  
What aid appear'd to avert the' approaching war,  
And saw where Teucer with the' Ajaces stood,  
Of fight insatiate, prodigal of blood.  
In vain he calls; the din of helms and shields  
Rings to the skies, and echoes through the fields;

The brazen hinges fly, the walls resound,  
Heaven trembles, roar the mountains, thunders  
all the ground.

Then thus to Thoös—‘ Hence with speed (he  
And urge the bold Ajaces to our aid; [said)  
Their strength, united, best may help to bear  
The bloody labours of the doubtful war:  
Hither the Lycian princes bend their course,  
The best and bravest of the hostile force.  
But if too fiercely there the foes contend,  
Let Telamon, at least, our towers defend,  
And Teucer haste with his unerring bow  
To share the danger, and repel the foe.’

Swift, at the word, the herald speeds along  
The lofty ramparts through the martial throng,  
And finds the heroes bathed in sweat and gore,  
Opposed in combat on the dusty shore.

‘ Ye valiant leaders of our warlike bands !  
Your aid (said Thoös) Peteus’ son demands ;  
Your strength, united, best may help to bear  
The bloody labours of the doubtful war :  
Thither the Lycian princes bend their course,  
The best and bravest of the hostile force.  
But if too fiercely here the foes contend,  
At least, let Telamon those towers defend,  
And Teucer haste with his unerring bow  
To share the danger, and repel the foe.’

Straight to the fort great Ajax turn’d his care,  
And thus bespoke his brothers of the war—  
‘ Now, valiant Lycomede ! exert your might,  
And, brave Oileus, prove your force in fight;  
To you I trust the fortune of the field,  
Till by this arm the foe shall be repell’d ;  
That done, expect me to complete the day—’  
Then, with his sevenfold shield, he strode away.

With equal steps bold Teucer press'd the shore,  
Whose fatal bow the strong Pandion bore.

High on the walls appear'd the Lycian powers,  
Like some black tempest gathering round the  
towers :

The Greeks, oppress'd, their utmost force unite,  
Prepared to labour in the unequal fight :  
The war renews, mix'd shouts and groans arise ;  
Tumultuous clamour mounts, and thickens in the  
skies.

Fierce Ajax first the' advancing host invades,  
And sends the brave Epicles to the shades,  
Sarpedon's friend ; across the warrior's way,  
Rent from the walls, a rocky fragment lay ;  
In modern ages not the strongest swain  
Could heave the' unwieldy burden from the plain :  
He poised, and swung it round ; then toss'd on high,  
It flew with force, and labour'd up the sky ;  
Full on the Lycian's helmet thundering down,  
The ponderous ruin crush'd his batter'd crown.  
As skilful divers from some airy steep  
Headlong descend, and shoot into the deep,  
So falls Epicles ; then in groans expires,  
And murmuring to the shades the soul retires.

While to the ramparts daring Glaucus drew,  
From Teucer's hand a winged arrow flew ;  
The bearded shaft the destined passage found,  
And on his naked arm inflicts a wound.  
The chief, who fear'd some foe's insulting boast  
Might stop the progress of his warlike host,  
Conceal'd the wound, and leaping from his height,  
Retired reluctant from the' unfinish'd fight.  
Divine Sarpedon with regret beheld  
Disabled Glaucus slowly quit the field ;

His beating breast with generous ardour glows,  
He springs to fight, and flies upon the foes.  
Alcmäon first was doom'd his force to feel;  
Deep in his breast he plunged the pointed steel;  
Then from the yawning wound with fury tore  
The spear, pursued by gushing streams of gore;  
Down sinks the warrior with a thundering sound,  
His brazen armour rings against the ground.

Swift to the battlement the victor flies,  
Tugs with full force, and every nerve applies :  
It shakes; the ponderous stones disjointed yield :  
The rolling ruins smoke along the field.  
A mighty breach appears; the walls lie bare;  
And, like a deluge, rushes in the war.  
At once bold Teucer draws the twanging bow,  
And Ajax sends his javelin at the foe;  
Fix'd in his belt the feather'd weapon stood,  
And through his buckler drove the trembling  
wood;

But Jove was present in the dire debate,  
To shield his offspring, and avert his fate.  
The prince gave back, not meditating flight,  
But urging vengeance, and severer fight;  
Then raised with hope, and fired with glory's  
charms,

His fainting squadrons to new fury warms.  
'O where, ye Lycians ! is the strength you boast ?  
Your former fame and ancient virtue lost !  
The breach lies open, but your chief in vain  
Attempts alone the guarded pass to gain :  
Unite, and soon that hostile fleet shall fall ;  
The force of powerful union conquers all.'

This just rebuke inflamed the Lycian crew ;  
They join, they thicken, and the assault renew :

Unmoved the' embodied Greeks their fury dare,  
And fix'd, support the weight of all the war;  
Nor could the Greeks repel the Lycian powers,  
Nor the bold Lycians force the Grecian towers.  
As on the confines of adjoining grounds,  
Two stubborn swains with blows dispute their  
bounds;

They tug, they sweat; but neither gain, nor yield,  
One foot, one inch, of the contended field;  
Thus obstinate to death, they fight, they fall;  
Nor these can keep, nor those can win, the wall.  
Their manly breasts are pierc'd with many a  
wound,

Loud strokes are heard, and rattling arms resound,  
The copious slaughter covers all the shore,  
And the high ramparts drop with human gore.

As when two scales are charged with doubtful  
loads,

From side to side the trembling balance nods,  
(While some laborious matron, just, and poor,  
With nice exactness weighs her woolly store)  
Till poised aloft, the resting beam suspends  
Each equal weight; nor this, nor that, descends;  
So stood the war, till Hector's matchless might,  
With fates prevailing, turn'd the scale of fight.  
Fierce as a whirlwind up the walls he flies,  
And fires his host with loud repeated cries.

‘ Advance, ye Trojans! lend your valiant hands,  
Haste to the fleet, and toss the blazing brands!’  
They hear, they run; and, gathering at his call,  
Raise scaling engines, and ascend the wall:  
Around the works a wood of glittering spears  
Shoots up, and all the rising host appears.  
A ponderous stone bold Hector heaved to throw,  
Pointed above, and rough and gross below:

Not two strong men the' enormous weight could  
raise,

Such men as live in these degenerate days.

Yet this, as easy as a swain could bear  
The snowy fleece, he toss'd, and shook in air :  
For Jove upheld, and lighten'd of its load  
The' unwieldy rock, the labour of a god.

Thus arm'd, before the folded gates he came,  
Of massy substance, and stupendous frame ;  
With iron bars and brazen hinges strong,  
On lofty beams of solid timber hung :

Then thundering through the planks with forceful  
sway,

Drives the sharp rock ; the solid beams give way,  
The folds are shatter'd ; from the crackling door  
Leap the resounding bars, the flying hinges roar.  
Now rushing in, the furious chief appears,

Gloomy as night ! and shakes two shining spears :  
A dreadful gleam from his bright armour came,  
And from his eyeballs flash'd the living flame.  
He moves a god, restless in his course,

And seems a match for more than mortal force.  
Then pouring after, through the gaping space,

A tide of Trojans flows, and fills the place ;

The Greeks behold, they tremble, and they fly ;  
The shore is heap'd with death, and tumult rends  
the sky.

## BOOK XIII.

## The Argument.

THE FOURTH BATTLE CONTINUED, IN WHICH NEPTUNE  
ASSISTS THE GREEKS : THE ACTS OF IDOMENEUS.

Neptune, concerned for the loss of the Grecians, upon seeing the fortification forced by Hector (who had entered the gate near the station of the Ajaes), assumes the shape of Calchas, and inspires those heroes to oppose him : then, in the form of one of the generals, encourages the other Greeks who had retired to their vessels. The Ajaes form their troops in a close phalanx, and put a stop to Hector and the Trojans. Several deeds of valour are performed ; Meriones, losing his spear in the encounter, repairs to seek another at the tent of Idomeneus : this occasions a conversation between those two warriors, who return together to the battle. Idomeneus signalizes his courage above the rest ; he kills Othryoneus, Asius, and Alcathous : Deiphobus and Æneas march against him, and at length Idomeneus retires. Menelaüs wounds Helenus, and kills Pisander. The Trojans are repulsed in the left wing ; Hector still keeps his ground against the Ajaes, till being galled by the Locrian slingers and archers, Polydamas advises to call a council of war : Hector approves his advice, but goes first to rally the Trojans ; upbraids Paris, rejoins Polydamas, meets Ajax again, and renews the attack.

The eight-and-twentieth day still continues. The scene is between the Grecian wall and the sea-shore.

WHEN now the thunderer on the sea-beat coast  
Had fix'd great Hector and his conquering host,  
He left them to the Fates, in bloody fray  
To toil and struggle through the well-fought day.  
Then turn'd to Thracia from the field of fight  
Those eyes that shed insufferable light,

To where the Mysians prove their martial force,  
And hardy Thracians tame the savage horse ;  
And where the far-famed Hippemolgian strays,  
Renown'd for justice and for length of days ;  
Thrice-happy race ! that, innocent of blood,  
From milk, innoxious, seek their simple food :  
Jove sees delighted ; and avoids the scene  
Of guilty Troy, of arms, and dying men :  
No aid, he deems, to either host is given,  
While his high law suspends the powers of heaven.

Meantime the monarch of the watery main  
Observed the thunderer, nor observed in vain.  
In Samothracia, on a mountain's brow,  
Whose waving woods o'erhung the deeps below,  
He sat ; and round him cast his azure eyes  
Where Ida's misty tops confusedly rise ;  
Below, fair Ilion's glittering spires were seen ;  
The crowded ships, and sable seas between.  
There, from the crystal chambers of the main  
Emerged, he sat ; and mourn'd his Argives slain.  
At Jove incensed, with grief and fury stung,  
Prone down the rocky steep he rush'd along ;  
Fierce as he pass'd, the lofty mountains nod,  
The forests shake ! earth trembled as he trod,  
And felt the' footsteps of the' immortal god.  
From realm to realm three ample strides he took,  
And, at the fourth, the distant *Ægæ* shook.

Far in the bay his shining palace stands,  
Eternal frame ! not raised by mortal hands :  
This having reach'd, his brass-hoof'd steeds he  
reins,  
Fleet as the winds, and deck'd with golden manes.  
Refulgent arms his mighty limbs infold,  
Immortal arms, of adamant and gold.

He mounts the car, the golden scourge applies,  
He sits superior, and the chariot flies :  
His whirling wheels the glassy surface sweep ;  
The' enormous monsters rolling o'er the deep  
Gambol around him on the watery way,  
And heavy whales in awkward measures play :  
The sea subsiding spreads a level plain,  
Exults, and owns the monarch of the main ;  
The parting waves before his coursers fly :  
The wondering waters leave his axle dry.

Deep in the liquid regions lies a cave,  
Between where Tenedos the surges lave,  
And rocky Imbrus breaks the rolling wave :  
There the great ruler of the azure round  
Stopp'd his swift chariot, and his steeds unbound,  
Fed with ambrosial herbage from his hand,  
And link'd their fetlocks with a golden band,  
Infrangible, immortal : there they stay :  
The father of the floods pursues his way :  
Where, like a tempest darkening heaven around,  
Or fiery deluge that devours the ground,  
The' impatient Trojans, in a gloomy throng,  
Engaged roll'd, as Hector rush'd along :  
To the loud tumult and the barbarous cry,  
The heavens reecho, and the shores reply :  
They vow destruction to the Grecian name,  
And in their hopes the fleets already flame.

But Neptune, rising from the seas profound,  
The god whose earthquakes rock the solid ground,  
Now wears a mortal form ; like Calchas seen,  
Such his loud voice, and such his manly mien ;  
His shouts incessant every Greek inspire,  
But most the' Ajaces, adding fire to fire.

‘ ‘Tis yours, O warriors, all our hopes to raise ;  
Oh recollect your ancient worth and praise !

'Tis yours to save us, if you cease to fear ;  
 Flight, more than shameful, is destructive here.  
 On other works though Troy with fury fall,  
 And pour her armies o'er our batter'd wall ;  
 There, Greece has strength ; but this, this part  
 o'erthrown,

Her strength were vain ; I dread for you alone :  
 Here Hector rages like the force of fire,  
 Vaunts of his gods, and calls high Jove his sire :  
 If yet some heavenly power your breast excite,  
 Breathe in your hearts, and string your arms to  
 fight, [taint ;

Greece yet may live, her threaten'd fleet main-  
 And Hector's force, and Jove's own aid, be vain.'

Then with his sceptre, that the deep controls,  
 He touch'd the chiefs, and steel'd their manly souls :  
 Strength, not their own, the touch divine imparts,  
 Prompts their light limbs, and swells their  
 daring hearts.

Then, as a falcon from the rocky height,  
 Her quarry seen, impetuous at the sight,  
 Forth-springing instant, darts herself from high,  
 Shoots on the wing, and skims along the sky ;  
 Such, and so swift, the power of ocean flew ;  
 The wide horizon shut him from their view.

The inspiring god, Oileus' active son  
 Perceived the first, and thus to Telamon—

'Some god, my friend, some god in human form,  
 Favouring descends, and wills to stand the storm.  
 Not Calchas this, the venerable seer ;  
 Short as he turn'd, I saw the power appear :  
 I mark'd his parting, and the steps he trod ;  
 His own bright evidence reveals a god.  
 E'en now some energy divine I share,  
 And seem to walk on wings, and tread in air !'

‘ With equal ardour (Telamon returns)  
My soul is kindled, and my bosom burns ;  
New rising spirits all my force alarm,  
Lift each impatient limb, and brace my arm.  
This ready arm, unthinking, shakes the dart ;  
The blood pours back, and fortifies my heart :  
Singly, methinks, yon towering chief I meet,  
And stretch the dreadful Hector at my feet.’

Full of the god that urged their burning breast,  
The heroes thus their mutual warmth express’d.  
Neptune meanwhile the routed Greeks inspired ;  
Who breathless, pale, with length of labours tired,  
Pant in the ships ; while Troy to conquest calls,  
And swarms victorious o’er their yielding walls :  
Trembling before the’ impending storm they lie,  
While tears of rage stand burning in their eye.  
Greece sunk they thought, and this their fatal hour ;  
But breathe new courage as they feel the power.  
Tencer and Leitus first his words excite ;  
Then stern Peneleus rises to the fight ;  
Thoäis, Deïpyrus, in arms renown’d,  
And Merion next, the’ impulsive fury found ;  
Last Nestor’s son the same bold ardour takes,  
While thus the god the martial fire awakes—

‘ Oh lasting infamy, oh dire disgrace  
To chiefs of vigorous youth and manly race !  
I trusted in the gods, and yon, to see  
Brave Greece victorious, and her navy free :  
Ah no—the glorious combat you disclaim,  
And one black day clouds all her former fame.  
Heavens ! what a prodigy these eyes survey,  
Unseen, unthought, till this amazing day !  
Fly we at length from Troy’s oft-conquer’d bands ?  
And falls our fleet by such inglorious hands ?

A rout undisciplined, a straggling train,  
Not born to glories of the dusty plain ;  
Like frightened fawns from hill to hill pursued,  
A prey to every savage of the wood :  
Shall these, so late who trembled at your name,  
Invade your camps, involve your ships in flame ?  
A change so shameful, say, what cause has  
wrought ?

The soldiers' baseness, or the general's fault ?  
Fools ! will ye perish for your leader's vice ;  
The purchase infamy, and life the price ?  
'Tis not your cause, Achilles' injured fame :  
Another's is the crime, but yours the shame.  
Grant that our chief offend through rage or lust,  
Must you be cowards, if your king's unjust ?  
Prevent this evil, and your country save :  
Small thought retrieves the spirits of the brave.  
Think, and subdue ! on dastards dead to fame  
I waste no anger, for they feel no shame :  
But you, the pride, the flower of all our host,  
My heart weeps blood to see your glory lost !  
Nor deem this day, this battle all you lose ;  
A day more black, a fate more vile ensues.  
Let each reflect, who prizes fame or breath,  
On endless infamy, on instant death :  
For lo ! the fated time, the appointed shore :  
Hark ! the gates burst, the brazen barriers roar !  
Impetuous Hector thunders at the wall ;  
The hour, the spot, to conquer or to fall.'

These words the Grecians' fainting hearts in-  
spire,  
And listening armies catch the godlike fire.  
Fix'd at his post was each bold Ajax found,  
With well-ranged squadrons strongly circled  
round :

So close their order, so disposed their fight,  
As Pallas' self might view with fix'd delight;  
Or had the god of war inclined his eyes,  
The god of war had own'd a just surprise.  
A chosen phalanx, firm, resolved as Fate,  
Descending Hector and his battle wait.

An iron scene gleams dreadful o'er the fields,  
Armour in armour lock'd, and shields in shields,  
Spears lean on spears, on targets targets throng,  
Helms stuck to helms, and man drove man along.  
The floating plumes unnumber'd wave above,  
As when an earthquake stirs the nodding grove;  
And level'd at the skies with pointing rays,  
Their brandish'd lances at each motion blaze.

Thus breathing death, in terrible array,  
The close-compacted legions urged their way:  
Fierce they drove on, impatient to destroy;  
Troy charged the first, and Hector first of Troy.  
As from some mountain's craggy forehead torn,  
A rock's round fragment flies, with fury borne,  
(Which from the stubborn stone a torrent rends)  
Precipitate the ponderous mass descends;  
From steep to steep the rolling ruin bounds;  
At every shock the crackling wood resounds;  
Still gathering force, it smokes; and urged amain,  
Whirls, leaps, and thunders down, impetuous to  
the plain; [proved,  
There stops—So Hector. Their whole force he  
Resistless when he raged, and, when he stopp'd,  
unmoved.

On him the war is bent, the darts are shed,  
And all their falchions wave around his head:  
Repulsed he stands, nor from his stand retires;  
But with repeated shouts his army fires.

‘Trojans ! be firm; this arm shall make your way  
Through yon square body, and that black array :  
Stand, and my spear shall rout their scattering  
power,

Strong as they seem, embattled like a tower;  
For he that Juno’s heavenly bosom warms,  
The first of gods, this day inspires our arms.’

He said, and roused the soul in every breast :  
Urged with desire of fame, beyond the rest,  
Forth march’d Deiphobus ; but, marching, held  
Before his wary steps his ample shield.

Bold Merion aim’d a stroke (nor aim’d it wide);  
The glittering javelin pierced the tough bull-hide ;  
But pierced not through : unfaithful to his hand,  
The point broke short, and sparkled in the sand.  
The Trojan warrior, touch’d with timely fear,  
On the raised orb to distance bore the spear.  
The Greek, retreating, mourn’d his frustrate blow,  
And cursed the treacherous lance that spared a foe ;  
Then to the ships with surly speed, he went,  
To seek a surer javelin in his tent.

Meanwhile with rising rage the battle glows,  
The tumult thickens, and the clamour grows.  
By Teucer’s arm the warlike Imbrius bleeds,  
The son of Mentor, rich in generous steeds.  
Ere yet to Troy the sons of Greece were led,  
In fair Pedæns’ verdant pastures bred,  
The youth had dwelt, remote from war’s alarms,  
And bless’d in bright Medesicaste’s arms ;  
(This nymph, the fruit of Priam’s ravish’d joy,  
Allied the warrior to the house of Troy).  
To Troy, when glory call’d his arms, he came,  
And match’d the bravest of her chiefs in fame :  
With Priam’s sons, a guardian of the throne,  
He lived, beloved, and honour’d as his own.

Him Teucer pierced between the throat and ear :  
He groans beneath the Telamonian spear.  
As from some far-seen mountain's airy crown,  
Subdued by steel, a tall ash tumbles down,  
And soils its verdant tresses on the ground ;  
So falls the youth ; his arms the fall resound.  
Then Teucer rushing to despoil the dead,  
From Hector's hand a shining javelin fled :  
He saw, and shunn'd the death ; the forceful dart  
Sung on, and pierced Amphimacus's heart,  
Cteatus' son, of Neptune's forceful line ;  
Vain was his courage, and his race divine !  
Prostrate he falls ; his clanging arms resound,  
And his broad buckler thunders on the ground.  
To seize his beamy helm the victor flies,  
And just had fasten'd on the dazzling prize,  
When Ajax' manly arm a javelin flung ;  
Full on the shield's round boss the weapon rung ;  
He felt the shock, nor more was doom'd to feel,  
Secure in mail, and sheath'd in shining steel.  
Repulsed he yields ; the victor Greeks obtain  
The spoils contested, and bear off the slain.  
Between the leaders of the' Athenian line,  
(Stichius the brave, Menestheus the divine)  
Deplored Amphimacus, sad object ! lies ;  
Imbrius' remains the fierce Ajaces' prize.  
As two grim lions bear across the lawn, [fawn,  
Snatch'd from devouring hounds, a slaughter'd  
In their fell jaws high-lifting through the wood,  
And sprinkling all the shrubs with drops of blood ;  
So these the chief : great Ajax from the dead  
Strips his bright arms ; Oileus lops the head :  
Toss'd like a ball, and whirl'd in air away,  
At Hector's feet the gory visage lay.

The god of ocean, fired with stern disdain,  
 And pierced with sorrow for his grandson slain,  
 Inspires the Grecian hearts, confirms their hands,  
 And breathes destruction on the Trojan bands.  
 Swift as a whirlwind rushing to the fleet,  
 He finds the lance-famed Idomen of Crete.  
 His pensive brow the generous care express'd  
 With which a wounded soldier touch'd his breast,  
 Whom in the chance of war a javelin tore,  
 And his sad comrades from the battle bore;  
 Him to the surgeons of the camp he sent;  
 That office paid, he issued from his tent  
 Fierce for the fight: to whom the god begun,  
 In Thoä's voice, Andræmon's valiant son,  
 Who ruled where Calydon's white rocks arise,  
 And Pleuron's chalky cliffs emblaze the skies—

‘ Where's now the’ imperious vaunt, the  
 daring boast,  
 Of Greece victorious, and proud Ilion lost?’

To whom the king—‘ On Greece no blame be  
 thrown,

Arms are her trade, and war is all her own.  
 Her hardy heroes from the well-fought plains  
 Nor fear withholds, nor shameful sloth detains:  
 ’Tis Heaven, alas! and Jove's all-powerful doom,  
 That far, far distant from our native home  
 Wills us to fall inglorious! Oh, my friend!  
 Once foremost in the fight, still prone to lend  
 Or arms or counsels, now perform thy best,  
 And what thou canst not singly, urge the rest.’

Thus he: and thus the god whose force can make  
 The solid globe's eternal basis shake—

‘ Ah! never may he see his native land,  
 But feed the vultures on this hateful strand,

Who seeks ignobly in his ships to stay,  
Nor dares to combat on this signal day !  
For this, behold ! in horrid arms I shine,  
And urge thy soul to rival acts with mine :  
Together let us battle on the plain ;  
Two, not the worst ; nor e'en this succour vain :  
Not vain the weakest, if their force unite ;  
But ours, the bravest have confess'd in fight.'

This said, he rushes where the combat burns ;  
Swift to his tent the Cretan king returns :  
From thence, two javelins glittering in his hand,  
And clad in arms that lighten'd all the strand,  
Fierce on the foe the' impetuous hero drove ;  
Like lightning bursting from the arm of Jove,  
Which to pale man the wrath of heaven declares,  
Or terrifies the' offending world with wars ;  
In streamy sparkles, kindling all the skies,  
From pole to pole the trail of glory flies :  
Thus his bright armour o'er the dazzled throng  
Gleam'd dreadful as the monarch flash'd along.

Him, near his tent, Meriones attends ;  
Whom thus he questions—‘ Ever best of friends !  
O say, in every art of battle skill'd,  
What holds thy courage from so brave a field ?  
On some important message art thou bound,  
Or bleeds my friend by some unhappy wound ?  
I glorious here, my soul abhors to stay,  
And glows with prospects of the' approaching day.’

‘ O prince ! (Meriones replies) whose care  
Leads forth the' embattled sons of Crete to war ;  
This speaks my grief : this headless lance I wield ;  
The rest lies rooted in a Trojan shield.’

To whom the Cretan—‘ Enter, and receive  
The wanted weapons ; those my tents can give ;

Spears I have store, (and Trojan lances all)  
That shed a lustre round the' illumined wall,  
Though I, disdainful of the distant war,  
Nor trust the dart, nor aim the' uncertain spear,  
Yet hand to hand I fight, and spoil the slain ;  
And thence those trophies, and these arms I gain.  
Enter, and see on heaps the helmets roll'd,  
And high-hung spears, and shields that flame  
with gold.'

‘ Nor vain (said Merion) are our martial toils ;  
We too can boast of no ignoble spoils :  
But those my ship contains ; whence distant far,  
I fight conspicuous in the van of war.  
What need I more ? If any Greek there be  
Who knows not Merion, I appeal to thee.’

To this, Idomeneus—‘ The fields of fight  
Have proved thy valour, and unconquer'd might ;  
And were some ambush for the foes design'd,  
E'en then thy courage would not lag behind.  
In that sharp service, singled from the rest,  
The fear of each, or valour, stands confess'd.  
No force, no firmness, the pale coward shows ;  
He shifts his place ; his colour comes and goes :  
A dropping sweat creeps cold on every part ;  
Against his bosom beats his quivering heart ;  
Terror and death in his wild eyeballs stare ;  
With chattering teeth he stands, and stiffening hair,  
And looks a bloodless image of despair !  
Not so the brave—still dauntless, still the same,  
Unchanged his colour, and unmoved his frame ;  
Composed his thought, determined is his eye,  
And fix'd his soul, to conquer or to die :  
If aught disturb the tenor of his breast,  
’Tis but the wish to strike before the rest.

‘ In such assays thy blameless worth is known,  
And every art of dangerous war thy own.  
By chance of fight whatever wounds you bore,  
Those wounds were glorious all, and all before ;  
Such as may teach, ’twas still thy brave delight  
To oppose thy bosom where the foremost fight.  
But why, like infants, cold to honour’s charms,  
Stand we to talk, when glory calls to arms ?  
Go—from my conquer’d spears the choicest take,  
And to their owners send them nobly back.’

Swift at the word bold Merion snatch’d a spear,  
And breathing slaughter follow’d to the war.  
So Mars armipotent invades the plain,  
(The wide destroyer of the race of man)  
Terror, his best loved son, attends his course,  
Arm’d with stern boldness, and enormous force ;  
The pride of haughty warriors to confound,  
And lay the strength of tyrants on the ground :  
From Thrace they fly, call’d to the dire alarms  
Of warring Phlegyans, and Ephyrian arms ;  
Invoked by both, relentless they dispose  
To these glad conquest, murderous rout to those.  
So march’d the leaders of the Cretan train,  
And their bright armis shot horror o’er the plain.

Then first spake Merion—‘ Shall we join the  
Or combat in the centre of the fight ? [right,  
Or to the left our wanted succour lend ?  
Hazard and fame all parts alike attend.’

‘ Not in the centre (Idomen replied),  
Our ablest chieftains the main battle guide ;  
Each godlike Ajax makes that post his care,  
And gallant Teucer deals destruction there,  
Skill’d or with shafts to gall the distant field,  
Or bear close battle on the sounding shield.

These can the rage of haughty Hector tame :  
Safe in their arms, the navy fears no flame ;  
Till Jove himself descends, his bolts to shed,  
And hurl the blazing ruin at our head.  
Great must he be, of more than human birth,  
Nor feed like mortals on the fruits of earth,  
Him neither rocks can crush, nor steel can wound,  
Whom Ajax fells not on the' ensanguined ground.  
In standing fight he mates Achilles' force,  
Excell'd alone in swiftness in the course.  
Then to the left our ready arms apply,  
And live with glory, or with glory die.'

He said ; and Merion to the' appointed place,  
Fierce as the god of battles, urged his pace,  
Soon as the foe the shining chiefs beheld  
Rush like a fiery torrent o'er the field,  
Their force embodied in a tide they pour ;  
The rising combat sounds along the shore.  
As warring winds, in Sirius' sultry reign,  
From different quarters sweep the sandy plain ;  
On every side the dusty whirlwinds rise,  
And the dry fields are lifted to the skies ;  
Thus by despair, hope, rage, together driven,  
Met the black hosts, and, meeting, darken'd  
heaven.

All dreadful glared the iron face of war,  
Bristled with upright spears, that flash'd afar ;  
Dire was the gleam of breastplates, helms, and  
shields,  
And polish'd arms emblazed the flaming fields :  
Tremendous scene ! that general horror gave,  
But touch'd with joy the bosoms of the brave.

Saturn's great sons in fierce contention vied,  
And crowds of heroes in their anger died.

The sire of earth and heaven, by Thetis won  
To crown with glory Peleus' godlike son,  
Will'd not destruction to the Grecian powers,  
But spared a while the destined Trojan towers:  
While Neptune, rising from his azure main,  
Warr'd on the king of heaven with stern disdain,  
And breathed revenge, and fired the Grecian  
train.

Gods of one source, of one ethereal race,  
Alike divine, and heaven their native place;  
But Jove the greater; first-born of the skies,  
And more than men, or gods, supremely wise.  
For this, of Jove's superior might afraid,  
Neptune in human form conceal'd his aid.  
These powers infold the Greek and Trojan train  
In war and discord's adamantine chain,  
Indissolubly strong: the fatal tie  
Is stretch'd on both, and close-compell'd they die.

Dreadful in arms, and grown in combats gray,  
The bold Idomenēus controls the day.  
First by his hand Othryoneus was slain,  
Swell'd with false hopes, with mad ambition vain!  
Call'd by the voice of war to martial fame,  
From high Cabesus' distant walls he came;  
Cassandra's love he sought, with boasts of power,  
And promised conquest was the proffer'd dower.  
The king consented, by his vaunts abused;  
The king consented, but the Fates refused.  
Proud of himself, and of the' imagined bride,  
The field he measured with a larger stride.  
Him as he stalk'd, the Cretan javelin found;  
Vain was his breastplate to repel the wound:  
His dream of glory lost, he plunged to hell:  
His arms resounded as the boaster fell.

The great Idomeneus bestrides the dead ;  
' And thus (he cried) behold thy promise sped !  
Such is the help thy arms to Ilion bring,  
And such the contract of the Phrygian king !  
Our offers now, illustrious prince ! receive ;  
For such an aid what will not Argos give ?  
To conquer Troy, with ours thy forces join,  
And count Atrides' fairest daughter thine.  
Meantime, on further methods to advise,  
Come, follow to the fleet thy new allies ;  
There hear what Greece has on her part to say.'  
He spoke, and dragg'd the gory corse away.

This Asius view'd, unable to contain,  
Before his chariot warring on the plain ;  
(His crowded coursers, to his squire consign'd,  
Impatient panted on his neck behind)  
To vengeance rising with a sudden spring,  
He hoped the conquest of the Cretan king.  
The wary Cretan, as his foe drew near,  
Full on his throat discharged the forceful spear :  
Beneath the chin the point was seen to glide,  
And glitter'd, extant at the further side.  
As when the mountain oak, or poplar tall,  
Or pine, fit mast for some great admiral,  
Groans to the oft-heaved axe, with many a wound,  
Then spreads a length of ruin o'er the ground :  
So sunk proud Asius in that dreadful day,  
And stretch'd before his much-loved coursers lay.  
He grinds the dust distain'd with streaming gore,  
And, fierce in death, lies foaming on the shore.  
Deprived of motion, stiff with stupid fear,  
Stands all aghast his trembling charioteer,  
Nor shuns the foe, nor turns the steeds away,  
But falls transfix'd, an unresisting prey :

Pierced by Antilochus, he pants beneath  
The stately ear, and labours out his breath.  
Thus Asius' steeds (their mighty master gone)  
Remain the prize of Nestor's youthful son.

Stabb'd at the sight, Deiphobus drew nigh,  
And made, with force, the vengeful weapon fly.  
The Cretan saw; and, stooping, caused to glance  
From his slope shield the disappointed lance.  
Beneath the spacious targe (a blazing round,  
Thick with bull-hides and brazen orbits bound,  
On his raised arm by two strong braces stay'd)  
He lay collected in defensive shade.  
O'er his safe head the javelin idly sung,  
And on the tinkling verge more faintly rung.  
E'en then the spear the vigorous arm confess'd,  
And pierc'd, obliquely, king Hypsenor's breast :  
Warm'd in his liver, to the ground it bore  
The chief, his people's guardian now no more !

' Not unattended (the proud Trojan cries),  
Nor unrevenged, lamented Asius lies : [play'd,  
For thee, though hell's black portals stand dis-  
This mate shall joy thy melancholy shade.'

Heart-piercing anguish, at the haughty boast,  
Touch'd every Greek, but Nestor's son the most.  
Grieved as he was, his pious arms attend,  
And his broad buckler shields his slaughter'd  
Till sad Mecistheus and Alastor bore [friend;  
His honour'd body to the tented shore.

Nor yet from fight Idomeneus withdraws ;  
Resolved to perish in his country's cause,  
Or find some foe whom Heaven and he shall doom  
To wail his fate in death's eternal gloom.  
He sees Alcathoüs in the front aspire :  
Great Æsyetes was the hero's sire :

His spouse Hippodamè, divinely fair,  
Anchises' eldest hope, and darling care :  
Who charm'd her parents' and her husband's heart  
With beauty, sense, and every work of art :  
He once of Ilion's youth the loveliest boy,  
The fairest she, of all the fair of Troy.  
By Neptune now the hapless hero dies,  
Who covers with a cloud those beanteous eyes,  
And fetters every limb : yet bent to meet  
His fate he stands ; nor shuns the lance of Crete.  
Fix'd as some column, or deep-rooted oak,  
While the winds sleep ; his breast received the  
stroke.

Before the ponderous stroke his corselet yields,  
Long used to ward the death in fighting fields.  
The riven armour sends a jarring sound :  
His labouring heart heaves with so strong a bound,  
The long lance shakes, and vibrates in the wound :  
Fast flowing from its source, as prone he lay,  
Life's purple tide impetuous gush'd away.

Then Idomen, insulting o'er the slain—  
'Behold, Deiphobus ! nor vaunt in vain :  
See ! on one Greek three Trojan ghosts attend,  
This, my third victim, to the shades I send.  
Approaching now, thy boasted might approve,  
And try the prowess of the seed of Jove.  
From Jove, enamour'd of a mortal dame,  
Great Minos, guardian of his country, came :  
Dencalion, blameless prince, was Minos' heir ;  
His first-born I, the third from Jupiter :  
O'er spacious Crete, and her bold sons, I reign ;  
And thence my ships transport me through the  
Lord of a host, o'er all my host I shine, [main :  
A scourge to thee, thy father, and thy line.'

The Trojan heard ; uncertain, or to meet  
Alone, with venturous arms, the king of Crete ;  
Or seek auxiliar force : at length decreed  
To call some hero to partake the deed,  
Forthwith Æneas rises to his thought :  
For him in Troy's remotest lines he sought ;  
Where he, incensed at partial Priam, stands,  
And sees superior posts in meaner hands.  
To him, ambitious of so great an aid,  
The bold Deiphobus approach'd, and said :

‘ Now, Trojan prince, employ thy pious arms,  
If e'er thy bosom felt fair honour's charms.  
Alcathoüs dies, thy brother and thy friend !  
Come, and the warrior's loved remains defend.  
Beneath his cares thy early youth was train'd,  
One table fed you, and one roof contain'd.  
This deed to fierce Idomenus we owe ;  
Haste, and revenge it on the' insulting foe.’

Æneas heard, and for a space resign'd  
To tender pity all his manly mind ;  
Then rising in his rage, he burns to fight :  
The Greek awaits him, with collected might.  
As the fell boar on some rough mountain's head,  
Arm'd with wild terrors, and to slaughter bred,  
When the loud rustics rise, and shout from far,  
Attends the tumult, and expects the war ;  
O'er his bent back the bristly horrors rise,  
Fires stream in lightning from his sanguine eyes,  
His foaming tusks both dogs and men engage,  
But most his hunters rouse his mighty rage :  
So stood Idomenus, his javelin shook,  
And met the Trojan with a lowering look.  
Antilochus, Deipyrus, were near,  
The youthful offspring of the god of war,

Merion, and Aphareus, in field renown'd :  
To these the warrior sent his voice around.  
' Fellows in arms ! your timely aid unite ;  
Lo, great Æneas rushes to the fight :  
Sprung from a god, and more than mortal bold ;  
He fresh in youth, and I in arms grown old.  
Else should this hand, this hour, decide the strife,  
The great dispute, of glory, or of life.'

He spoke, and all as with one soul obey'd ;  
Their lifted bucklers cast a dreadful shade  
Around the chief. Æneas too demands  
The assisting forces of his native bands :  
Paris, Deiphobus, Agenor, join ;  
(Co-aids and captains of the Trojan line)  
In order follow all the embodied train,  
Like Ida's flocks proceeding o'er the plain ;  
Before his fleecy care, erect and bold,  
Stalks the proud ram, the father of the fold :  
With joy the swain surveys them, as he leads  
To the cool fountains, through the well known  
So joys Æneas, as his native band [meads ;  
Moves on in rank, and stretches o'er the land.

Round dead Alcathous now the battle rose ;  
On every side the steely circle grows ; [ring,  
Now batter'd breastplates and hack'd helmets  
And o'er their heads unheeded javelins sing.  
Above the rest, two towering chiefs appear,  
There great Idomeneus, Æneas here ;  
Like gods of war, dispensing fate, they stood,  
And burn'd to drench the ground with mutual  
The Trojan weapon whizz'd along in air, [blood.  
The Cretan saw, and shunn'd the brazen spear :  
Sent from an arm so strong, the missive wood  
Stuck deep in earth, and quiver'd where it stood.

But **Enomas** received the Cretan's stroke ;  
The forceful spear his hollow corselet broke,  
It ripp'd his belly with a ghastly wound,  
And roll'd the smoking entrails to the ground.  
Stretch'd on the plain, he sobs away his breath,  
And, furious, grasps the bloody dust in death.  
The victor from his breast the weapon tears ;  
His spoils he could not, for the shower of spears.  
Though now unfit an active war to wage,  
Heavy with cumbrous arms, stiff with cold age,  
His listless limbs unable for the course,  
In standing fight he yet maintains his force ;  
Till faint with labour, and by foes repell'd,  
His tired slow steps he drags from off the field.

Deiphobus beheld him as he pass'd,  
And, fired with hate, a parting javelin cast :  
The javelin err'd, but held its course along,  
And pierc'd Asealaphus, the brave and young :  
The son of Mars fell gasping on the ground,  
And gnash'd the dust all bloody with his wound.

Nor knew the furious father of his fall ;  
High-throned amidst the great Olympian hall,  
On golden clouds the' immortal synod sat ;  
Detain'd from bloody war by Jove and Fate.

Now, where in dust the breathless hero lay,  
For slain Asealaphus commenced the fray.  
Deiphobus to seize his helmet flies,  
And from his temples rends the glittering prize ;  
Valiant as Mars, Meriones drew near,  
And on his loaded arm discharged his spear :  
He drops the weight, disabled with the pain ;  
The hollow helmet rings against the plain.  
Swift as a vulture leaping on his prey,  
From his torn arm the Grecian rent away

The reeking javelin, and rejoin'd his friends.  
His wounded brother good Polites tends ;  
Around his waist his pious arms he threw,  
And from the rage of combat gently drew :  
Him his swift coursers, on his splendid car,  
Rapp'd from the lessening thunder of the war ;  
To Troy they drove him, groaning from the shore,  
And sprinkling, as he pass'd, the sands with gore.

Meanwhile fresh slaughter bathes the sanguine ground,  
Heaps fall on heaps, and heaven and earth resound.  
Bold Aphareus by great Æneas bled ;  
As toward the chief he turn'd his daring head,  
He pierced his throat ; the bending head, de-  
press'd  
Beneath his helmet, nods upon his breast ;  
His shield reversed o'er the fallen warrior lies ;  
And everlasting slumber seals his eyes.  
Antilochus, as Thoön turn'd him round,  
Transpierced his back with a dishonest wound :  
The hollow vein, that to the neck extends  
Along the chine, his eager javelin rends :  
Supine he falls, and to his social train  
Spreads his imploring arms, but spreads in vain.  
The exulting victor, leaping where he lay,  
From his broad shoulders tore the spoils away ;  
His time observed ; for closed by foes around,  
On all sides thick, the peals of arms resound.  
His shield emboss'd the ringing storm sustains,  
But he impervious and untouch'd remains.  
(Great Neptune's care preserved from hostile rage  
This youth, the joy of Nestor's glorious age)  
In arms intrepid, with the first he fought,  
Faced every foe, and every danger sought ;

His winged lance, resistless as the wind,  
Obeys each motion of the master's mind ;  
Restless it flies, impatient to be free,  
And meditates the distant enemy.  
The son of Asius, Adamas, drew near,  
And struck his target with the brazen spear,  
Fierce in his front : but Neptune wards the blow,  
And blunts the javelin of the' eluded foe :  
In the broad buckler half the weapon stood ;  
Splinter'd on earth flew half the broken wood.  
Disarm'd, he mingled in the Trojan crew ;  
But Merion's spear o'ertook him as he flew,  
Deep in the belly's rim an entrance found,  
Where sharp the pang, and mortal is the wound.  
Bending he fell, and, doubled to the ground,  
Lay panting. Thus an ox, in fetters tied,  
While death's strong pangs distend his labouring  
    side,  
His bulk enormous on the field displays ;  
His heaving heart beats thick as ebbing life decays.  
The spear the conqueror from his body drew,  
And death's dim shadows swam before his view.  
Next brave Deipyrus in dust was laid :  
King Helenus waved high the Thracian blade,  
And smote his temples with an arm so strong,  
The helm fell off, and roll'd amid the throng :  
There, for some luckier Greek it rests a prize ;  
For dark in death the godlike owner lies !  
Raging with grief, great Menelaüs burns,  
And, fraught with vengeance, to the victor turns ;  
That shook the ponderous lance, in act to throw ;  
And this stood adverse with the bended bow :  
Full on his breast the Trojan arrow fell,  
But harmless bounded from the plated steel.

As on some ample barn's well-harden'd floor,  
(The winds collected at each open door)  
While the broad fan with force is whirl'd around,  
Light leaps the golden grain, resulting from the  
ground ;

So from the steel that guards Atrides' heart,  
Repell'd to distance, flies the bounding dart.

Atrides, watchful of the' unwary foe, [bow,  
Pierced with his lance the hand that grasp'd the  
And nail'd it to the yew : the wounded hand  
Trail'd the long lance that mark'd with blood the  
sand :

But good Agenor gently from the wound  
The spear solicits, and the bandage bound ;  
A sling's soft wool, snatch'd from a soldier's side,  
At once the tent and ligature supplied.

Behold ! Pisander, urged by Fate's decree,  
Springs through the ranks to fall, and fall by thee,  
Great Menelaüs : To enhance thy fame,  
High-towering in the front, the warrior e me.  
First the sharp lance was by Atrides thrown ;  
The lance far distant by the winds was blown.  
Nor pierc'd Pisander through Atrides' shield ;  
Pisander's spear fell shiver'd on the field.  
Not so discouraged, to the future blind,  
Vain dreams of conquest swell his haughty mind ;  
Dauntless he rushes where the Spartan lord  
Like lightning brandish'd his far-beaming sword.  
His left arm high opposed the shining shield :  
His right, beneath, the cover'd pole-axe held ;  
(An olive's cloudy grain the handle made,  
Distinct with studs ; and brazen was the blade)  
This on the helm discharged a noble blow ;  
The plume dropp'd nodding to the plain below,

Shorn from the crest. Atrides waved his steel:  
Deep through his front the weighty falchion fell;  
The crashing bones before its force gave way;  
In dust and blood the groaning hero lay;  
Forced from their ghastly orbs, and spouting gore,  
The clotted eyeballs tumble on the shore.  
The fierce Atrides spurn'd him as he bled,  
Tore off his arms, and, loud-exulting, said:

‘Thus, Trojans, thus, at length be taught to fear;  
O race perfidious, who delight in war!  
Already noble deeds ye have perform'd;  
A princess raped transcends a navy storm'd:  
In such bold feats your impious might approve,  
Without the assistance, or the fear, of Jove.  
The violated rites, the ravish'd dame,  
Our heroes slaughter'd, and our ships on flame,  
Crimes heap'd on crimes shall bend your glory  
And whelm in ruins yon flagitious town. [down,  
O thou, great Father! lord of earth and skies,  
Above the thought of man, supremely wise!  
If from thy hand the fates of mortals flow,  
From whence this favour to an impious foe?  
A godless crew, abandon'd and unjust,  
Still breathing rapine, violence, and lust?  
The best of things, beyond their measure, cloy;  
Sleep's balmy blessing, love's endearing joy;  
The feast, the dance; whate'er mankind desire,  
E'en the sweet charms of sacred numbers tire.  
But Troy for ever reaps a dire delight  
In thirst of slaughter, and in lust of fight.’

This said, he seized (while yet the carcass  
heaved)

The bloody armour, which his train received:  
Then sudden mix'd among the warring crew,  
And the bold son of Pylæmenes slew.

Harpalion had through Asia travel'd far,  
Following his martial father to the war:  
Through filial love he left his native shore,  
Never, ah never, to behold it more!  
His unsuccessful spear he chanced to fling  
Against the target of the Spartan king;  
Thus of his lance disarm'd, from death he flies,  
And turns around his apprehensive eyes.  
Him, through the hip transpiercing as he fled,  
The shaft of Merion mingled with the dead.  
Beneath the bone the glancing point descends,  
And, driven down, the swelling bladder rends:  
Sunk in his sad companions' arms he lay,  
And in short pantings sobb'd his soul away;  
(Like some vile worm extended on the ground)  
While life's red torrent gush'd from out the wound.

Him on his car the Paphlagonian train  
In slow procession bore from off the plain.  
The pensive father, father now no more!  
Attends the mournful pomp along the shore;  
And unavailing tears profusely shed;  
And, unrevenged, deplored his offspring dead.

Paris from far the moving sight beheld,  
With pity soften'd, and with fury swell'd:  
His honour'd host, a youth of matchless grace,  
And loved of all the Paphlagonian race!  
With his full strength he bent his angry bow,  
And wing'd the feather'd vengeance at the foe.  
A chief there was, the brave Euchenor named,  
For riches much, and more for virtue famed,  
Who held his seat in Corinth's stately town;  
Polydus' son, a seer of old renown.  
Oft had the father told his early doom,  
By arms abroad, or slow disease at home:

He climb'd his vessel, prodigal of breath,  
And chose the certain, glorious path to death.  
Beneath his ear the pointed arrow went;  
The soul came issuing at the narrow vent:  
His limbs, unnerved, drop useless to the ground.  
And everlasting darkness shades him round.

Nor knew great Hector how his legions yield,  
(Wrapp'd in the cloud and tumult of the field):  
Wide on the left the force of Greece commands,  
And conquest hovers o'er the' Achaian bands;  
With such a tide superior virtue sway'd,  
And he that shakes the solid earth gave aid.  
But in the centre Hector fix'd remain'd, [gain'd;  
Where first the gates were forced, and bulwarks  
There, on the margin of the hoary deep,  
(Their naval station where the' Ajaces keep,  
And where low walls confine the beating tides,  
Whose humble barrier scarce the foes divides;  
Where late in fight both foot and horse engaged,  
And all the thunder of the battle raged)  
There join'd, the whole Boeotian strength remains,  
The prond Ionians with their sweeping trains,  
Locrians and Phthians, and the' Epaean force;  
But join'd, repel not Hector's fiery course.  
The flower of Athens, Stichius, Phidas, led,  
Bias and great Menestheus at their head,  
Meges the strong the' Epaean bands control'd,  
And Dracins prudent, and Amphion bold:  
The Phthians, Medon, famed for martial might,  
And brave Podarces, active in the fight.  
This drew from Phylaeus his noble line;  
Iphielus' son: and that (Oileus) thine:  
(Young Ajax' brother, by a stolen embrace;  
He dwelt far distant from his native place,

By his fierce stepdame from his father's reign  
Expell'd and exiled for her brother slain):  
These rule the Phthians, and their arms employ,  
Mix'd with Boeotians, on the shores of Troy.

Now side by side, with like unwearied care,  
Each Ajax labour'd through the field of war:  
So when two lordly bulls, with equal toil, [soil,  
Force the bright ploughshares through the fallow  
Join'd to one yoke, the stubborn earth they tear,  
And trace large furrows with the shining share;  
O'er their huge limbs the foam descends in snow,  
And streams of sweat down their sour foreheads  
flow.

A train of heroes followed through the field,  
Who bore by turns great Ajax' sevenfold shield;  
Whene'er he breathed, remissive of his might,  
Tired with the incessant slaughters of the fight.  
No following troops his brave associate grace:  
In close engagement an unpractised race,  
The Locrian squadrons nor the javelin wield,  
Nor bear the helm, nor lift the moony shield;  
But skill'd from far the flying shaft to wing,  
Or whirl the sounding pebble from the sling,  
Dexterous with these they aim a certain wound,  
Or fell the distant warrior to the ground.

Thus in the van the Telamonian train, [tain:  
Throng'd in bright arms, a pressing fight main-  
Far in the rear the Locrian archers lie,  
Whose stones and arrows intercept the sky,  
The mingled tempest on the foes they pour;  
Troy's scattering orders open to the shower.

Now had the Greeks eternal fame acquired,  
And the gall'd Ilians to their walls retired;  
But sage Polydamas, discreetly brave,  
Address'd great Hector, and this counsel gave—

‘ Though, great in all, thou seem’st averse to  
Impartial audience to a faithful friend ; [lend  
To gods and men thy matchless worth is known,  
And every art of glorious war thy own ;  
But in cool thought and counsel to excel,  
How widely differs this from warring well ?  
Content with what the bounteous gods have given,  
Seek not alone to’ engross the gifts of Heaven.  
To some the powers of bloody war belong,  
To some, sweet music, and the charm of song ;  
To few, and wondrous few, has Jove assign’d  
A wise, extensive, all-considering mind ;  
Their guardians these, the nations round confess,  
And towns and empires for their safety bless.  
If Heaven have lodged this virtue in my breast,  
Attend, O Hector, what I judge the best.  
See, as thou movest, on dangers dangers spread,  
And war’s whole fury burns around thy head.  
Behold ! distress’d within yon hostile wall,  
How many Trojans yield, disperse, or fall !  
What troops, out-number’d, scarce the war  
maintain !  
And what brave heroes at the ships lie slain !  
Here cease thy fury : and, the chiefs and kings  
Convoked to council, weigh the sum of things.  
Whether (the gods succeeding our desires)  
To yon tall ships to bear the Trojan fires ;  
Or quit the fleet, and pass unhurt away,  
Contented with the conquest of the day.  
I fear, I fear, lest Greece, not yet undone,  
Pay the large debt of last revolving sun ;  
Achilles, great Achilles, yet remains  
On yonder decks, and yet o’erlooks the plains !’

The counsel pleased ; and Hector, with a bound,  
Leap'd from his chariot on the trembling ground ;  
Swift as he leap'd, his clang ing arms resound.  
' To guard this post (he cried) thy art employ,  
And here detain the scatter'd youth of Troy ;  
Where yonder heroes faint, I bend my way,  
And hasten back to end the doubtful day.'

This said, the towering chief prepares to go,  
Shakes his white plumes that to the breezes flow,  
And seemis a moving mountain topp'd with snow.  
Through all his host, inspiring force, he flies,  
And bids anew the martial thunder rise.  
To Panthus' son, at Hector's high command,  
Haste the bold leaders of the Trojan band :  
But round the battlements, and round the plain,  
For many a chief he look'd, but look'd in vain ;  
Deiphobus, nor Helenus the seer,  
Nor Asius' son, nor Asius' self appear :  
For these were pierc'd with many a ghastly wound,  
Some cold in death, some groaning on the ground ;  
Some low in dust (a mournful object) lay ;  
High on the wall some breathed their souls away.

Far on the left, amid the throng he found  
(Cheering the troops, and dealing deaths around)  
The graceful Paris ; whom, with fury moved,  
Opprobrious, thus, the' impatient chief reproved :

' Ill-fated Paris ! slave to womankind,  
As smooth of face as fraudulent of mind !  
Where is Deiphobus, where Asius gone ?  
The godlike father, and the' intrepid son ?  
The force of Heleus, dispensing fate ;  
And great Othryoneus, so fear'd of late ?  
Black fate hangs o'er thee from the' avenging gods,  
Imperial Troy from her foundations nods ;

Whelm'd in thy country's ruins shalt thou fall,  
And one devouring vengeance swallow all.'

When Paris thus : ' My brother and my friend,  
Thy warm impatience makes thy tongue offend.  
In other battles I deserved thy blame,  
Though then not deedless, nor unknown to fame :  
But since you rampart by thy arms lay low,  
I scatter'd slaughter from my fatal bow.  
The chiefs you seek on yonder shore lie slain ;  
Of all those heroes, two alone remain ;  
Deiphobus, and Helenus the seer,  
Each now disabled by a hostile spear.  
Go then, successful, where thy soul inspires :  
This heart and hand shall second all thy fires :  
What with this arm I can, prepare to know,  
Till death for death be paid, and blow for blow.  
But 'tis not ours, with forces not our own  
To combat ; strength is of the gods alone.'

These words the hero's angry mind assuage :  
Then fierce they mingle where the thickest rage.  
Around Polydamas, distain'd with blood,  
Cebrion, Phalces, stern Orthæus stood,  
Palmus, with Polypœtes the divine,  
And two bold brothers of Hippotion's line  
(Who reach'd fair Ilion, from Ascania far,  
The former day ; the next engaged in war).  
As when from gloomy clouds a whirlwind springs,  
That bears Jove's thunder on its dreadful wings,  
Wide o'er the blasted fields the tempest sweeps ;  
Then, gather'd, settles on the hoary deeps ;  
The afflicted deeps tumultuous mix and roar ;  
The waves behind impel the waves before,  
Wide rolling, foaming high, and tumbling to the  
shore :

Thus rank on rank the thick battalions throng,  
Chief urged on chief, and man drove man along.  
Far o'er the plains, in dreadful order bright,  
The brazen arms reflect a beamy light :  
Full in the brazen van great Hector shined,  
Like Mars commission'd to confound mankind.  
Before him flaming, his enormous shield,  
Like the broad sun, illumined all the field ;  
His nodding helm emits a streamy ray ;  
His piercing eyes through all the battle stray,  
And, while beneath his targe he flash'd along,  
Shot terrors round, that wither'd e'en the strong.

Thus stalk'd he, dreadful ; death was in his look.  
Whole nations fear'd : but not an Argive shook.  
The towering Ajax, with an ample stride,  
Advanced the first, and thus the chief defied—

‘ Hector ! come on, thy empty threats forbear :  
’Tis not thy arm, ’tis thundering Jove, we fear :  
The skill of war to us not idly given,  
Lo ! Greece is humbled, not by Troy, but Heaven.  
Vain are the hopes that haughty mind imparts,  
To force our fleet : the Greeks have hands, and  
hearts.

Long ere in flames our lofty navy fall,  
Your boasted city, and your god-built wall,  
Shall sink beneath us, smoking on the ground ;  
And spread a long unmeasured ruin round.  
The time shall come, when chased along the plain  
E'en thou shalt call on Jove, and call in vain ;  
E'en thou shalt wish, to aid thy desperate course,  
The wings of falcons for thy flying horse ;  
Shalt run, forgetful of a warrior’s fame,  
While clouds of friendly dust conceal thy shame.’

As thus he spoke, behold, in open view,  
On sounding wings a dexter eagle flew.  
To Jove's glad omen all the Grecians rise,  
And hail, with shouts, his progress through the  
skies :

Far-echoing clamours bound from side to side ;  
They ceased ; and thus the chief of Troy replied—  
‘ From whence this menace, this insulting strain ?  
Enormous boaster ! doom'd to vaunt in vain.  
So may the gods on Hector life bestow,  
(Not that short life which mortals lead below,  
But such as those of Jove's high lineage born,  
The blue-eyed maid, or he that gilds the morn)  
As this decisive day shall end the fame  
Of Greece, and Argos be no more a name.  
And thou, imperious ! if thy madness wait  
The lance of Hector, thou shalt meet thy fate :  
That giant corse, extended on the shore,  
Shall largely feast the fowls with fat and gore.’

He said, and like a lion stalk'd along :  
With shouts incessant earth and ocean rung,  
Sent from his following host : the Grecian train  
With answering thunders fill the echoing plain ;  
A shout that tore heaven's concave, and above  
Shook the fix'd splendours of the throne of Jove.

## BOOK XIV.

## The Argument.

## JUNO DECEIVES JUPITER BY THE GIRDLE OF VENUS.

Nestor, sitting at the table with Machaon, is alarmed with the increasing clamour of the war, and hastens to Agamemnon: on his way he meets that prince with Diomed and Ulysses, whom he informs of the extremity of the danger. Agamemnon proposes to make their escape by night, which Ulysses withstands: to which Diomed adds his advice, that, wounded as they were, they should go forth and encourage the army with their presence; which advice is pursued. Juno, seeing the partiality of Jupiter to the Trojans, forms a design to overreach him; she sets off her charms with the utmost care, and (the more surely to enchant him) obtains the magic girdle of Venus. She then applies herself to the god of sleep, and, with some difficulty, persuades him to seal the eyes of Jupiter; this done, she goes to mount Ida, where the god, at first sight, is ravished with her beauty, sinks in her embraces, and is laid asleep. Neptune takes advantage of his slumber, and succours the Greeks: Hector is struck to the ground with a prodigious stone by Ajax, and carried off from the battle: several actions succeed; till the Trojans, much distressed, are obliged to give way: the lesser Ajax signalizes himself in a particular manner.

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BUT nor the genial feast, nor flowing bowl,  
Could charm the cares of Nestor's watchful soul;  
His startled ears the' increasing cries attend;  
Then thus, impatient, to his wounded friend—

‘ What new alarm, divine Machaon, say,  
What mix'd events attend this mighty day?  
Hark! how the shouts divide, and how they meet,  
And now come full, and thicken to the fleet!  
Here, with the cordial draught dispel thy care,  
Let Hecamede the strengthening bath prepare,

Refresh thy wound, and cleanse the clotted gore;  
While I the' adventures of the day explore.'

He said: and, seizing Thrasymedes' shield  
(His valiant offspring), hasten'd to the field;  
(That day the son his father's buckler bore)  
Then snatch'd a lance, and issued from the door.  
Soon as the prospect open'd to his view,  
His wounded eyes the scene of sorrow knew;  
Dire disarray! the tumult of the fight,  
The wall in ruins, and the Greeks in flight.  
As when old ocean's silent surface sleeps,  
The waves just heaving on the purple deeps;  
While yet the' expected tempest hangs on high,  
Weighs down the cloud, and blackens in the sky,  
The mass of waters will no wind obey;  
Jove sends one gust, and bids them roll away;  
While wavering counsels thus his mind engage,  
Fluctuates in doubtful thought the Pylian sage,  
To join the host, or to the general haste;  
Debating long, he fixes on the last:  
Yet, as he moves, the sight his bosom warms,  
The field rings dreadful with the clang of arms;  
The gleaming falchions flash, the javelins fly;  
Blows echo blows, and all or kill, or die.

Him, in his march, the wounded princes meet,  
By tardy steps ascending from the fleet:  
The king of men, Ulysses the divine,  
And who to Tydeus owes his noble line.  
(Their ships at distance from the battle stand,  
In lines advanced along the shelving strand:  
Whose bay, the fleet unable to contain  
At length; beside the margin of the main,  
Rank above rank, the crowded ships they moor:  
Who landed first, lay highest on the shore.)

Supported on their spears, they took their way,  
Unfit to fight, but anxious for the day.

Nestor's approach alarm'd each Grecian breast,  
Whom thus the general of the host address'd—

‘ O grace and glory of the’ Achaian name !  
What drives thee, Nestor, from the field of fame ?  
Shall then proud Hector see his boast fulfill'd,  
Our fleets in ashes, and our heroes kill'd ?  
Such was his threat, ah ! now too soon made good,  
On many a Grecian bosom writ in blood.  
Is every heart inflamed with equal rage  
Against your king, nor will one chief engage ?  
And have I lived to see with mournful eyes  
In every Greek a new Achilles rise ?

Gerenian Nestor then—‘ So Fate has will'd ;  
And all-confirming time has fate fulfill'd.  
Not he that thunders from the’ aerial bower,  
Not Jove himself, upon the past has power,  
The wall, our late inviolable bound,  
And best defence, lies smoking on the ground :  
E'en to the ships their conquering arms extend,  
And groans of slaughter'd Greeks to heaven  
ascend.

On speedy measures then employ your thought  
In such distress ; if counsel profit aught :  
Arms cannot much : though Mars our souls incite,  
These gaping wounds withhold us from the fight.’

To him the monarch—‘ That our army bends,  
That Troy triumphant our high fleet ascends,  
And that the rampart, late our surest trust,  
And best defence, lies smoking in the dust ;  
All this from Jove's afflictive hand we bear,  
Who, far from Argos, wills our ruin here.  
Pass'd are the days when happier Greece was  
And all his favour, all his aid confess'd ; [bless'd,

Now Heaven averse, our hands from battle ties,  
And lifts the Trojan glory to the skies.  
Cease we at length to waste our blood in vain,  
And launch what ships lie nearest to the main ;  
Leave these at anchor till the coming night :  
Then, if impetuous Troy forbear the fight,  
Bring all to sea, and hoist each sail for flight.  
Better from evils, well foreseen, to run,  
Than perish in the danger we may shun.'

Thus he. The sage Ulysses thus replies,  
While anger flash'd from his disdainful eyes—  
‘ What shameful words (unkingly as thou art)  
Fall from that trembling tongue, and timorous  
heart !

Oh were thy sway the curse of meaner powers,  
And thou the shame of any host but ours ;  
A host, by Jove endued with martial might,  
And taught to conquer, or to fall in fight :  
Adventurous combats and bold wars to wage,  
Employ'd our youth, and yet employs our age.  
And wilt thou thus desert the Trojan plain ?  
And have whole streams of blood been spill'd in  
vain ?

In such base sentence if thou couch thy fear,  
Speak it in whispers, lest a Greek should hear.  
Lives there a man so dead to fame, who dares  
To think such meanness, or the thought declares ?  
And comes it e'en from him whose sovereign sway  
The banded legions of all Greece obey ?  
Is this a general's voice, that calls to flight,  
While war hangs doubtful, while his soldiers fight ?  
What more could Troy ? What yet their fate denies  
Thou givest the foe : all Greece becomes their prize.  
No more the troops (our hoisted sails in view,  
Themselves abandon'd) shall the fight pursue ;

But thy ships flying, with despair shall see ;  
And owe destruction to a prince like thee.'

‘ Thy just reproofs (Atrides calm replies)  
Like arrows pierce me, for thy words are wise.  
Unwilling as I am to lose the host,  
I force not Greece to quit this hateful coast ;  
Glad I submit, whoe'er, or young or old,  
Aught, more conducive to our weal, unfold.’

Tydides cut him short, and thus began—  
‘ Such counsel if you seek, behold the man  
Who boldly gives it, and what he shall say,  
Young though he be, disdain not to obey :  
A youth, who from the mighty Tydeus springs,  
May speak to councils and assembled kings.  
Hear then in me the great Oenides’ son,  
Whose honour’d dust (his race of glory run)  
Lies whelm’d in ruins of the Theban wall ;  
Brave in his life, and glorious in his fall. [bless’d,  
With three bold sons was generous Prothoüs  
Who Pleuron’s walls and Calydon possess’d ;  
Melas and Agrius (but who far surpass’d  
The rest in courage, Oeneus was the last.  
From him, my sire. From Calydon expell’d,  
He pass’d to Argos, and in exile dwell’d ;  
The monarch’s daughter there (so Jove ordain’d)  
He won, and flourish’d where Adrastus reign’d ;  
There, rich in fortune’s gifts, his acres till’d,  
Beheld his vines their liquid harvest yield,  
And numerous flocks that whiten’d all the field.  
Such Tydeus was, the foremost once in fame !  
Nor lives in Greece a stranger to his name.  
Then, what for common good my thoughts inspire,  
Attend, and in the son respect the sire.  
Though sore of battle, though with wounds op-  
Let each go forth and animate the rest, [press’d,

Advance the glory which he cannot share,  
Though not partaker, witness of the war. [quite,  
But lest new wounds on wounds o'erpower us  
Beyond the missile javelin's sounding flight  
Safe let us stand; and, from the tumult far,  
Inspire the ranks, and rule the distant war.]

He added not: the listening kings obey,  
Slow moving on; Atrides leads the way.  
The god of ocean (to inflame their rage)  
Appears a warrior furrow'd o'er with age;  
Press'd in his own, the general's hand he took,  
And thus the venerable hero spoke—

‘ Atrides! lo! with what disdainful eye  
Achilles sees his country's forces fly;  
Blind impious man! whose anger is his guide,  
Who glories in unutterable pride.  
So may he perish, so may Jove disdain  
The wretch relentless, and o'erwhelm with shame!  
But Heaven forsakes not thee: o'er yonder sands  
Soon shalt thou view the scatter'd Trojan bands  
Fly diverse; while proud kings, and chiefs re-  
nown'd, [around  
Driven heaps on heaps, with clouds involved  
Of rolling dust, their winged wheels employ  
To hide their ignominious heads in Troy.]

He spoke, then rush'd amid the warrior crew,  
And sent his voice before him as he flew,  
Loud, as the shout encountering armies yield  
When twice ten thousand shake the labouring field;  
Such was the voice, and such the thundering sound  
Of him whose trident rends the solid ground.  
Each Argive bosom beats to meet the fight,  
And grisly war appears a pleasing sight.

Meantime Saturnia from Olympus' brow,  
High throned in gold, beheld the fields below;

With joy the glorious conflict she survey'd,  
Where her great brother gave the Grecians aid,  
But placed aloft, on Ida's shady height  
She sees her Jove, and trembles at the sight.  
Jove to deceive, what methods shall she try,  
What arts, to blind his all-beholding eye?  
At length she trusts her power; resolved to prove  
The old, yet still successful, cheat of love;  
Against his wisdom to oppose her charms,  
And lull the lord of thunders in her arms.

Swift to her bright apartment she repairs,  
Sacred to dress and beauty's pleasing cares:  
With skill divine had Vulcan form'd the bower,  
Safe from access of each intruding power.  
Touch'd with her secret key, the doors unfold:  
Self-closed, behind her shut the valves of gold.  
Here first she bathes; and round her body pours  
Soft oils of fragrance, and ambrosial showers:  
The winds, perfumed, the balmy gale convey  
Through heaven, through earth, and all the aërial  
Spirit divine! whose exhalation greets [way:  
The sense of gods with more than mortal sweets.  
Thus while she breathed of heaven, with decent  
Her artful hands the radiant tresses tied; [pride  
Part on her head in shining ringlets roll'd,  
Part o'er her shoulders waved like melted gold.  
Around her next a heavenly mantle flow'd  
That rich with Pallas' labour'd colours glow'd:  
Large clasps of gold the foldings gather'd round,  
A golden zone her swelling bosom bound.  
Far-beaming pendants tremble in her ear,  
Each gem illumined with a triple star.  
Then o'er her head she casts a veil more white  
Than new-fallen snow, and dazzling as the light.

Last her fair feet celestial sandals grace.  
Thus issuing radiant with majestic pace,  
Forth from the dome the imperial goddess moves,  
And calls the mother of the smiles and loves.

‘ How long (to Venus thus apart she cried)  
Shall human strife celestial minds divide?  
Ah yet, will Venus aid Saturnia’s joy,  
And set aside the cause of Greece and Troy?’

‘ Let heaven’s dread empress (Cytheræa said)  
Speak her request, and deem her will obey’d.’

‘ Then grant me (said the queen) those con-  
quering charms,  
That power, which mortals and immortals warms,  
That love, which melts mankind in fierce desires,  
And burns the sons of heaven with sacred fires!

‘ For lo! I haste to those remote abodes,  
Where the great parents (sacred source of gods!)  
Ocean and Tethys their old empire keep,  
On the last limits of the land and deep.

In their kind arms my tender years were pass’d;  
What time old Saturn, from Olympus cast,  
Of upper heaven to Jove resign’d the reign,  
Whelm’d under the huge mass of earth and main.  
For strife, I hear, has made the union cease,  
Which held so long that ancient pair in peace.  
What honour, and what love, shall I obtain,  
If I compose those fatal feuds again;  
Once more their minds in mutual ties engage,  
And, what my youth has owed, repay their age!’

She said. ‘ With awe divine, the queen of love  
Obey’d the sister and the wife of Jove;  
And from her fragrant breast the zone unbraced,  
With various skill and high embroidery graced.  
In this was every art, and every charm,  
To win the wisest, and the coldest warm:

Fond love, the gentle vow, the gay desire,  
The kind deceit, the still-reviving fire,  
Persuasive speech, and more persuasive sighs,  
Silence that spoke, and eloquence of eyes.  
This on her hand the Cyprian goddess laid:  
‘ Take this, and with it all thy wish;’ she said.  
With smiles she took the charm; and smiling  
The powerful cestus to her snowy breast. [press’d

Then Venus to the courts of Jove withdrew;  
Whilst from Olympus pleased Saturnia flew.  
O'er high Pieria thence her course she bore,  
O'er fair Emathia's everpleasing shore,  
O'er Henus' hills with snows eternal crown'd;  
Nor once her flying foot approach'd the ground.  
Then taking wing from Athos' lofty steep,  
She speeds to Lemnos o'er the rolling deep,  
And seeks the cave of Death's half-brother, Sleep.

‘ Sweet pleasing Sleep! (Saturnia thus began)  
Who spread'st thy empire o'er each god and man;  
If e'er obsequious to thy Juno's will,  
O power of slumbers! hear, and favour still.  
Shed thy soft dews on Jove's immortal eyes,  
While sunk in love's entrancing joys he lies.  
A splendid footstool, and a throne, that shine  
With gold unfading, Somnus, shall be thine;  
The work of Vulcan; to indulge thy ease,  
When wine and feasts thy golden humours please.’

‘ Imperial dame (the balmy power replies),  
Great Saturn's heir, and empress of the skies!  
O'er other gods I spread my easy chain;  
The sire of all, old Ocean, owns my reign,  
And his hush'd waves lie silent on the main:  
But how, unbidden, shall I dare to steep  
Jove's awful temples in the dew of sleep?

Long since too venturous, at thy bold command,  
On those eternal lids I laid my hand ;  
What time, deserting Ilion's wasted plain,  
His conquering son, Alcides, plough'd the main.  
When lo ! the deeps arise, the tempests roar,  
And drive the hero to the Coan shore :  
Great Jove, awaking, shook the bless'd abodes  
With rising wrath, and tumbled gods on gods ;  
Me chief he sought, and from the realms on high  
Had hurl'd indignant to the nether sky,  
But gentle Night, to whom I fled for aid,  
(The friend of earth and heaven) her wings dis-  
play'd ;

Empower'd the wrath of gods and men to tame,  
E'en Jove revered the venerable dame.'

‘ Vain are thy fears (the queen of heaven replies,  
And, speaking, rolls her large majestic eyes) ;  
Think'st thou that Troy has Jove's high favour  
Like great Alcides, his all-conquering son ? [won,  
Hear, and obey the mistress of the skies,  
Nor for the deed expect a vulgar prize ;  
For know, thy loved one shall be ever thine,  
The youngest Grace, Pasithaë the divine.’

‘ Swear then (he said) by those tremendous floods  
That roar through hell, and bind the’ invoking gods :  
Let the great parent earth one hand sustain,  
And stretch the other o'er the sacred main :  
Call the black Titans, that with Chronos dwell,  
To hear and witness from the depths of hell ;  
That she, my loved one, shall be ever mine,  
The youngest Grace, Pasithaë the divine.’

The queen assents, and from the’ infernal bowers  
Invokes the sable subtartarean powers,  
And those who rule the’ inviolable floods,  
Whom mortals name the dread Titanian gods.

Then swift as wind, o'er Lemnos' smoky isle  
They wing their way, and Imbrus' sea-beat soil;  
Through air, unseen, involved in darkness glide,  
And light on Lectos, on the point of Ide  
(Mother of savages, whose echoing hills  
Are heard resounding with a hundred rills):  
Fair Ida trembles underneath the god;  
Hush'd are her mountains, and her forests nod.  
There on a fir, whose spiry branches rise  
To join its summit to the neighbouring skies,  
Dark in embowering shade, conceal'd from sight,  
Sat Sleep, in likeness of the bird of night  
(Chalcis his name by those of heavenly birth,  
But call'd Cymindis by the race of earth).

To Ida's top successful Juno flies;  
Great Jove surveys her with desiring eyes:  
The god, whose lightning sets the heavens on fire,  
Through all his bosom feels the fierce desire;  
Fieree as when first by stealth he seized her  
charms,  
Mix'd with her soul, and melted in her arms:  
Fix'd on her eyes he fed his eager look, [spoke—  
Then press'd her hand, and thus with transport  
‘Why comes my goddess from the’ ethereal sky,  
And not her steeds and flaming chariot nigh?’

Then she—‘ I haste to those remote abodes  
Where the great parents of the deathless gods,  
The reverend Ocean, and gray Tethys, reign,  
On the last limits of the land and main.  
I visit these, to whose indulgent cares  
I owe the nursing of my tender years:  
For strife, I hear, has made that union cease  
Which held so long this ancient pair in peace.  
The steeds, prepared my chariot to convey  
O'er earth and seas, and through the’ aerial way,

Wait under Ide : of thy superior power  
To ask consent, I leave the' Olympian bower;  
Nor seek, unknown to thee, the sacred cells  
Deep under seas, where hoary Ocean dwells.'

‘ For that (said Jove) suffice another day!  
But eager love denies the least delay.  
Let softer cares the present hour employ,  
And be these moments sacred all to joy.  
Ne'er did my soul so strong a passion prove,  
Or for an earthly, or a heavenly love :  
Not when I press'd Ixion's matchless dame,  
Whence rose Pirithous like the gods in fame :  
Not when fair Danaë felt the shower of gold  
Stream into life, whence Perseus brave and bold.  
Not thus I burn'd for either Theban dame :  
(Bacchus from this, from that Alcides came)  
Not Phœnix' daughter, beautiful and young,  
Whence godlike Rhadamanth and Minos sprung.  
Not thus I burn'd for fair Latona's face,  
Nor comelier Ceres' more majestic grace.  
Not thus e'en for thyself I felt desire,  
As now my veins receive the pleasing fire.’

He spoke ; the goddess with the charming eyes  
Glowed with celestial red, and thus replies—  
‘ Is this a scene for love ? On Ida's height,  
Exposed to mortal and immortal sight ;  
Our joys profaned by each familiar eye ;  
The sport of heaven, and fable of the sky ;  
How shall I e'er review the bless'd abodes,  
Or mix among the senate of the gods ?  
Shall I not think, that, with disorder'd charms,  
All heaven beholds me recent from thy arms ?  
With skill divine has Vulcan form'd thy bower,  
Sacred to love and to the genial hour ;

If such thy will, to that recess retire,  
And secret there indulge thy soft desire.'

She ceased; and, smiling with superior love,  
Thus answer'd mild the cloud-compelling Jove:  
' Nor god, nor mortal, shall our joys beheld,  
Shaded with clouds, and circumfused in gold;  
Not e'en the sun, who darts through heaven his  
    rays,

And whose broad eye the' extended earth surveys.'

Gazing he spoke, and, kindling at the view,  
His eager arms around the goddess threw.  
Glad Earth perceives, and from her bosom pours  
Unbidden herbs and voluntary flowers:  
Thick new-born violets a soft carpet spread,  
And clustering lotos swell'd the rising bed,  
And sudden hyacinths the turf bestrow,  
And flamy crocus made the mountain glow.  
There golden clouds conceal the heavenly pair,  
Steep'd in soft joys and circumfused with air;  
Celestial dews, descending o'er the ground,  
Perfume the mount, and breathe ambrosia round.  
At length, with love and sleep's soft power op-  
    press'd,

The panting thunderer nods, and sinks to rest.

Now to the navy borne on silent wings,  
To Neptune's ear soft Sleep his message brings;  
Beside him sudden, unperceived, he stood,  
And thus with gentle words address'd the god—

‘ Now, Neptune! now, the' important hour  
    employ,  
To check a while the haughty hopes of Troy:  
While Jove yet rests, while yet my vapours shed  
The golden vision round his sacred head;  
For Juno's love, and Somnus' pleasing ties,  
Have closed those awful and eternal eyes.'

Thus having said, the power of slumber flew,  
On human lids to drop the balmy dew.  
Neptune, with zeal increased, renews his care,  
And towering in the foremost ranks of war,  
Indignant thus——‘ Oh once of martial fame!  
O Greeks! if yet ye can deserve the name!  
This half-recover’d day shall Troy obtain?  
Shall Hector thunder at your ships again?  
Lo still he vaunts, and threatens the fleet with fires,  
While stern Achilles in his wrath retires.  
One hero’s loss too tamely you deplore,  
Be still yourselves, and we shall need no more,  
Oh yet, if glory any bosom warms,  
Brace on your firmest helms, and stand to arms:  
His strongest spear each valiant Grecian wield,  
Each valiant Grecian seize his broadest shield;  
Let to the weak the lighter arms belong,  
The ponderous targe be wielded by the strong.  
Thus arm’d, not Hector shall our presence stay;  
Myself, ye Greeks! myself will lead the way.’

The troops assent; their martial arms they  
change:

The busy chiefs their banded legions range. [pain,  
The kings, though wounded, and oppress’d with  
With helpful hands themselves assist the train.  
The strong and cumbrous arms the valiant wield,  
The weaker warrior takes a lighter shield.  
Thus sheath’d in shining brass, in bright array  
The legions march, and Neptune leads the way:  
His brandish’d falchion flames before their eyes,  
Like lightning flashing through the frighted skies.  
Clad in his might, the earth-shaking power appears;  
Pale mortals tremble, and confess their fears.

Troy’s great defender stands alone unawed,  
Arms his proud host, and dares oppose a god:

And lo ! the god, and wondrous man, appear :  
The sea's stern ruler there, and Heetor here.  
The roaring main, at her great master's call,  
Rose in huge ranks, and form'd a watery wall  
Around the ships; seas hanging o'er the shores :  
Both armies join : earth thunders, ocean roars.  
Not half so loud the bellowing deeps resound  
When stormy winds disclose the dark profound;  
Less loud the winds that from the' Æolian hall  
Roar through the woods and make whole forests  
fall ;

Less loud the woods, when flames in torrents pour,  
Catch the dry mountain, and its shades devour :  
With such a rage the meeting hosts are driven,  
And such a clamour shakes the sounding heaven.  
The first bold javelin, urged by Heetor's force,  
Direct at Ajax' bosom wing'd its course ;  
But there no pass the crossing belts afford  
(One braeed his shield, and one sustain'd his  
sword).

Then baek the disappointed Trojan drew,  
And cursed the lance that unavailing flew :  
But scaped not Ajax ; his tempestuous hand  
A ponderous stone up-heaving from the sand,  
(Where heaps laid loose beneath the warrior's feet,  
Or served to ballast, or to prop the fleet)  
Toss'd round and round, the missive marble flings ;  
On the raised shield the falling ruin rings,  
Full on his breast and throat with force descends ;  
Nor deaden'd there its giddy fury spends,  
But whirling on, with many a fiery round,  
Smokes in the dust, and ploughs into the ground.  
As when the bolt, red-hissing from above,  
Darts on the consecrated plant of Jove,

The mountain-oak in flaming ruin lies,  
Black from the blow, and smokes of sulphur rise;  
Stiff with amaze the pale beholders stand,  
And own the terrors of the'almighty hand !  
So lies great Hector prostrate on the shore;  
His slacken'd hand deserts the lance it bore;  
His following shield the fallen chief o'erspread;  
Beneath his helmet dropp'd his fainting head;  
His load of armour, sinking to the ground,  
Clanks on the field; a dead and hollow sound.  
Loud shouts of triumph fill the crowded plain;  
Greece sees, in hope, Troy's great defender slain:  
All spring to seize him; storms of arrows fly;  
And thicker javelins intercept the sky.  
In vain an iron tempest hisses round;  
He lies protected, and without a wound,  
Polydamas, Agenor the divine,  
The pious warrior of Anchises' line,  
And each bold leader of the Lycian band,  
With covering shields (a friendly circle) stand.  
His mournful followers, with assistant care,  
The groaning hero to his chariot bear;  
His foaming coursers, swifter than the wind,  
Speed to the town, and leave the war behind.

When now they touch'd the mead's enamel'd  
Where gentle Xanthus rolls his easy tide, [side,  
With watery drops the chief they sprinkle round,  
Placed on the margin of the flowery ground.  
Raised on his knees, he now ejects the gore;  
Now faints anew, low-sinking on the shore;  
By fits he breathes, half views the fleeting skies,  
And seals again, by fits, his swimming eyes.

Soon as the Greeks the chief's retreat beheld,  
With double fury each invades the field.

Oilean Ajax first his javelin sped,  
Pierced by whose point the son of Enops bled;  
(Satnius the brave, whom beauteous Neis bore  
Amidst her flocks on Satnio's silver shore)  
Struck through the belly's rim, the warrior lies  
Supine, and shades eternal veil his eyes.  
An arduous battle rose around the dead;  
By turns the Greeks, by turns the Trojans bled.

Fired with revenge, Polydamas drew near,  
And at Prothenor shook the trembling spear;  
The driving javelin through his shoulder thrust,  
He sinks to earth, and grasps the bloody dust.  
'Lo thus (the victor cries) we rule the field,  
And thus their arms the race of Panthus wield:  
From this unerring hand there flies no dart  
But bathes its point within a Grecian heart.  
Prop'd on that spear to which thou owest thy fall,  
Go, guide thy darksome steps to Pluto's dreary  
hall!'

He said, and sorrow touch'd each Argive breast:  
The soul of Ajax burn'd above the rest.  
As by his side the groaning warrior fell,  
At the fiercee foe he launch'd his piercing steel;  
The foe, reclining, shunn'd the flying death;  
But Fate, Arehiloachus, demands thy breath:  
Thy lofty birth no succour could impart,  
The wings of death o'ertook thee on the dart;  
Swift to perform Heaven's fatal will, it fled  
Full on the junture of the neck and head,  
And took the joint, and cut the nerves in twain:  
The dropping head first tumbled to the plain.  
So just the stroke, that yet the body stood  
Erect, then roll'd along the sands in blood.

'Here, proud Polydamas, here turn thy eyes!  
The towering Ajax loud insulting cries)

Say, is this chief extended on the plain  
A worthy vengeance for Prothenor slain?  
Mark well his port! his figure and his face  
Nor speak him vulgar, nor of vulgar race;  
Sometimes, methinks, may make his lineage known,  
Antenor's brother, or perhaps his son.'

He spake, and smiled severe, for well he knew  
The bleeding youth: Troy sadden'd at the view.  
But furious Aeamas avenged his cause;  
As Promachus his slaughter'd brother draws,  
He pierc'd his heart—'Such fate attends you all,  
Proud Argives! destined by our arms to fall.  
Not Troy alone, but haughty Greece, shall share  
The toils, the sorrows, and the wounds of war.  
Behold your Promachus deprived of breath,  
A victim owed to my brave brother's death.  
Not unappeas'd he enters Pluto's gate,  
Who leaves a brother to revenge his fate.'

Heart-piercing anguish struck the Grecian host,  
But touch'd the breast of bold Peneleus most;  
At the proud boaster he directs his course;  
The boaster flies, and shuns superior force.  
But young Ilioneus received the spear;  
Ilioneus, his father's only care:  
(Phorbas the rich, of all the Trojan train  
Whom Hermes loved, and taught the arts of gain)  
Full in his eye the weapon chanced to fall,  
And from the fibres scoop'd the rooted ball,  
Drove through the neck, and hurl'd him to the plain:  
He lifts his miserable arms in vain!  
Swift his broad falchion fierce Peneleus spread,  
And from the spouting shoulders struck his head;  
To earth at once the head and helmet fly;  
The lance, yet sticking through the bleeding eye,

The victor seized ; and, as aloft he shook  
The gory visage, thus insulting spoke :

‘ Trojans ! your great Ilioneus behold !  
Haste, to his father let the tale be told :  
Let his high roofs resound with frantic woe,  
Such as the house of Promachus’ must know ;  
Let doleful tidings greet his mother’s ear,  
Such as to Promachus sad spouse we bear,  
When we victorious shall to Greece return,  
And the pale matron in our triumphs mourn.’

Dreadful he spoke, then toss’d the head on high ;  
The Trojans hear, they tremble, and they fly :  
Aghast they gaze around the fleet and wall,  
And dread the ruin that impends on all.

Daughters of Jove ! that on Olympus shine,  
Ye all-beholding, all-recording nine !  
O say, when Neptune made proud Ilion yield,  
What chief, what hero first imbrued the field ?  
Of all the Grecians what immortal name,  
And whose bless’d trophies, will ye raise to fame ?

Thou first, great Ajax ! on the’ ensanguined plain  
Laid Hyrtius, leader of the Mysian train.  
Phalces and Mermer, Nestor’s son o’erthrew.  
Bold Merion, Morys and Hippotion slew.  
Strong Periphætes and Prothoön bled,  
By Teucer’s arrows mingled with the dead.  
Pierced in the flank by Menelaüs’ steel,  
His people’s pastor, Hyperenor, fell ;  
Eternal darkness wrapp’d the warrior round,  
And the fierce soul came rushing through the  
wound.

But stretch’d in heaps before Oileus’ son,  
Fall mighty numbers, mighty numbers run ;  
Ajax the less, of all the Grecian race  
Skill’d in pursuit, and swiftest in the chase.

## BOOK XV.

## The Argument.

## THE FIFTH BATTLE, AT THE SHIPS; AND THE ACTS OF AJAX.

Jupiter, awaking, sees the Trojans repulsed from the trenches, Hector in a swoon, and Neptune at the head of the Greeks: he is highly incensed at the artifice of Juno, who appeases him by her submissions; she is then sent to Iris and Apollo. Juno, repairing to the assembly of the gods, attempts with extraordinary address to incense them against Jupiter; in particular she touches Mars with a violent resentment: he is ready to take arms, but is prevented by Minerva. Iris and Apollo obey the orders of Jupiter; Iris commands Neptune to leave the battle, to which, after much reluctance and passion, he consents. Apollo reinspires Hector with vigour, brings him back to the battle, marches before him with his aegis, and turns the fortune of the fight. He breaks down great part of the Grecian wall: the Trojans rush in, and attempt to fire the first line of the fleet, but are, as yet, repelled by the greater Ajax with a prodigious slaughter.

Now in swift flight they pass the trench profound,  
And many a chief lay gasping on the ground:  
Then stopp'd and panted, where the chariots lie;  
Fear on their cheek, and horror in their eye.  
Meanwhile, awaken'd from his dream of love,  
On Ida's summit sat imperial Jove:  
Round the wide fields he cast a careful view,  
There saw the Trojans fly, the Greeks pursue;  
These proud in arms, those scatter'd o'er the plain;  
And, midst the war, the monarch of the main.

Not far, great Hector on the dust he spies,  
(His sad associates round with weeping eyes)  
Ejecting blood, and panting yet for breath,  
His senses wandering to the verge of death.  
The god beheld him with a pitying look,  
And thus, incensed, to fraudulent Juno spoke—

‘ O thou, still adverse to the’ eternal will,  
For ever studious in promoting ill !  
Thy arts have made the godlike Hector yield,  
And driven his conquering squadrons from the  
field.

Canst thou, unhappy in thy wiles ! withstand  
Our power immense, and brave the’ almighty hand ?  
Hast thou forgot, when, bound and fix’d on high,  
From the vast concave of the spangled sky,  
I hung thee trembling in a golden chain,  
And all the raging gods opposed in vain ?  
Headlong I hurl’d them from the’ Olympian hall,  
Stunn’d in the whirl, and breathless with the fall.  
For godlike Hercules these deeds were done,  
Nor seem’d the vengeance worthy such a son :  
When, by thy wiles induced, fierce Boreas toss’d  
The shipwreck’d hero on the Coan coast,  
Him through a thousand forms of death I bore,  
And sent to Argos, and his native shore.  
Hear this, remember, and our fury dread,  
Nor pull the’ unwilling vengeance on thy head ;  
Lest arts and blandishments successless prove,  
Thy soft deceits, and well-dissembled love.’

The thunderer spoke : imperial Juno mourn’d,  
And, trembling, these submissive words re-  
turn’d—

‘ By every oath that powers immortal ties,  
The foodful earth, and all-infolding skies ;

By thy black waves, tremendous Styx ! that flow  
Through the drear realms of gliding ghosts below ;  
By the dread honours of thy sacred head,  
And that unbroken vow, our virgin bed !  
Not by my arts the ruler of the main  
Steeps Troy in blood, and ranges round the plain :  
By his own ardour, his own pity sway'd  
To help his Greeks, he fought and disobey'd :  
Else had thy Juno better counsels given,  
And taught submission to the sire of heaven.'

‘ Think'st thou with me ? fair empress of the  
skies !

(The' immortal father with a smile replies !)  
Then soon the haughty sea-god shall obey,  
Nor dare to act but when we point the way.  
If truth inspires thy tongue, proclaim our will  
To yon bright synod on the' Olympian hill ;  
Our high decree let various Iris know,  
And call the god that bears the silver bow.  
Let her descend, and from the' embattled plain  
Command the sea-god to his watery reign :  
While Phœbus hastes great Hector to prepare  
To rise afresh, and once more wake the war ;  
His labouring bosom reinspires with breath,  
And calls his senses from the verge of death.  
Greece chased by Troy, e'en to Achilles' fleet,  
Shall fall by thousands at the hero's feet.  
He, not untouched with pity, to the plain  
Shall send Patroclus, but shall send in vain.  
What youth he slaughters under Ilion's walls !  
E'en my loved son, divine Sarpedon, falls !  
Vanquish'd at last by Hector's lance he lies ;  
Then, nor till then, shall great Achilles rise :  
And lo ! that instant, godlike Hector dies.

From that great hour the war's whole fortune turns,  
Pallas assists, and lofty Ilion burns.  
Not till that day shall Jove relax his rage,  
Nor one of all the heavenly host engage  
In aid of Greece. The promise of a god  
I gave, and seal'd it with the' almighty nod,  
Achilles' glory to the stars to raise ;  
Such was our word, and Fate the word obeys.'

The trembling queen (the' almighty order given)  
Swift from the' Idæan summit shot to heaven.  
As some wayfaring man, who wanders o'er  
In thought a length of lands he trod before,  
Sends forth his active mind from place to place,  
Joins hill to dale, and measures space with space ;  
So swift flew Juno to the bless'd abodes,  
If thought of man can match the speed of gods.  
There sat the powers in awful synod placed ;  
They bow'd and made obeisance as she pass'd  
Through all the brazen dome : with goblets crown'd  
They hail her queen ; the nectar streams around.  
Fair Themis first presents the golden bowl,  
And anxious asks what cares disturb her soul ?

To whom the white-arm'd goddess thus replies :  
' Enough thou know'st the tyrant of the skies,  
Severely bent his purpose to fulfil,  
Unmoved his mind, and unrestrain'd his will.  
Go thou, the feasts of heaven attend thy call ;  
Bid the crown'd nectar circle round the hall :  
But Jove shall thunder through the' ethereal dome  
Such stern decrees, such threaten'd woes to come,  
As soon shall freeze mankind with dire surprise,  
And damp the' eternal banquets of the skies.'

The goddess said, and sullen took her place ;  
Black horror sadden'd each celestial face.

To see the gathering grudge in every breast,  
Smiles on her lips a spleenful joy express'd ;  
While on her wrinkled front, and eyebrow bent,  
Sat steadfast care, and lowering discontent.  
Thus she proceeds—‘ Attend, ye powers above !  
But know, 'tis madness to contest with Jove :  
Supreme he sits ; and sees, in pride of sway,  
Your vassal godheads grudgingly obey :  
Fierce in the majesty of power, controls ;  
Shakes all the thrones of heaven, and bends the  
Submiss, immortals ! all he wills, obey : [poles.  
And thou, great Mars, begin and show the way.  
Behold Ascalaphus ! behold him die,  
But dare not murmur, dare not vent a sigh ;  
Thy own loved boasted offspring lies o'erthrown,  
If that loved boasted offspring be thy own.’

Stern Mars, with anguish for his slaughter'd son,  
Smote his rebelling breast, and fierce begun—  
‘ Thus then, immortals ! thus shall Mars obey ;  
Forgive me, gods, and yield my vengeance way :  
Descending first to yon forbidden plain,  
The god of battles dares avenge the slain ;  
Dares, though the thunder bursting o'er my head  
Should hurl me blazing on those heaps of dead.’

With that, he gives command to Fear and Flight  
To join his rapid coursers for the fight :  
Then grim in arms, with hasty vengeance flies ;  
Arms that reflect a radiance through the skies.  
And now had Jove, by bold rebellion driven,  
Discharged his wrath on half the host of heaven ;  
But Pallas, springing through the bright abode,  
Starts from her azure throne to calm the god.  
Struck for the immortal race with timely fear,  
From frantic Mars she snatch'd the shield and  
spear :

Then the huge helmet lifting from his head,  
Thus to the impetuous homicide she said—

‘ By what wild passion, furious ! art thou toss’d ?  
Strivest thou with Jove ? thou art already lost.  
Shall not the thunderer’s dread command restrain,  
And was imperial Juno heard in vain ? [driven,  
Back to the skies wouldest thou with shame be  
And in thy guilt involve the host of heaven ?  
Ilion and Greece no more should Jove engage ;  
The skies would yield an ampler scene of rage,  
Guilty and guiltless find an equal fate,  
And one vast ruin whelm the Olympian state.  
Cease then thy offspring’s death unjust to call ;  
Heroes as great have died, and yet shall fall.  
Why should heaven’s law with foolish man com-  
Exempted from the race ordain’d to die ?’ [ply,

This menace fix’d the warrior to his throne ;  
Sullen he sat, and curb’d the rising groan.  
Then Juno call’d (Jove’s orders to obey)  
The winged Iris and the god of day.

‘ Go wait the thunderer’s will (Saturnia cried)  
On you tall summit of the fountful Ide :  
There in the father’s awful presence stand,  
Receive, and execute his dread command.’

She said, and sat : the god that gilds the day,  
And various Iris, wing their airy way.  
Swift as the wind, to Ida’s hills they came  
(Fair nurse of fountains and of savage game),  
There sat the eternal : he whose nod controls  
The trembling world, and shakes the steady poles.  
Veil’d in a mist of fragrance him they found,  
With clouds of gold and purple circled round.  
Well pleased the thunderer saw their earnest care,  
And prompt obedience to the queen of air ;

Then (while a smile serenes his awful brow)  
Commands the goddess of the showery bow:  
‘ Iris! descend, and what we here ordain  
Report to yon mad tyrant of the main.  
Bid him from fight to his own deeps repair,  
Or breathe from slaughter in the fields of air.  
If he refuse, then let him timely weigh  
Our elder birthright, and superior sway.  
How shall his rashness stand the dire alarms,  
If heaven’s omnipotence descend in arms?  
Strives he with me, by whom his power was given,  
And is there equal to the lord of heaven?’

The’ almighty spoke; the goddess wing’d her  
To sacred Ilion from the’ Idaean height. [flight  
Swift as the rattling hail, or fleecy snows,  
Drive through the skies, when Boreas fiercely  
So from the clouds descending Iris falls; [blows;  
And to blue Neptune thus the goddess calls—

‘ Attend the mandate of the sire above,  
In me behold the messenger of Jove:  
He bids thee from forbidden wars repair  
To thine own deeps, or to the fields of air.  
This if refused, he bids thee timely weigh  
His elder birthright and superior sway.  
How shall thy rashness stand the dire alarms,  
If Heaven’s omnipotence descend in arms?  
Strivest thou with him by whom all power is given?  
And art thou equal to the lord of Heaven?’

‘ What means the haughty sovereign of the  
skies?’

(The king of ocean thus, incensed, replies)  
Rule as he will his portion’d realms on high;  
No vassal god, nor of his train, am I.  
Three brother deities from Saturn came,  
And ancient Rhea, earth’s immortal dame:

Assign'd by lot our triple rule we know;  
Infernal Pluto sways the shades below;  
O'er the wide clouds, and o'er the starry plain,  
Ethereal Jove extends his high domain;  
My court beneath the hoary waves I keep,  
And hush the roarings of the sacred deep:  
Olympus, and this earth, in common lie;  
What claim has here the tyrant of the sky?  
Far in the distant clouds let him control,  
And awe the younger brothers of the pole;  
There to his children his commands be given,  
The trembling, servile, second race of heaven.'

‘ And must I then (said she) O sire of floods!  
Bear this fierce answer to the king of gods?  
Correct it yet, and change thy rash intent;  
A noble mind disdains not to repent.  
To elder brothers guardian fiends are given  
To scourge the wretch insulting them and Heaven.’

‘ Great is the profit (thus the god rejoin'd)  
When ministers are bless'd with prudent mind:  
Warn'd by thy words, to powerful Jove I yield,  
And quit, though angry, the contended field.  
Not but his threats with justice I disclaim,  
The same our honours, and our birth the same.  
If yet, forgetful of his promise given  
To Hermes, Pallas, and the queen of heaven,  
To favour Ilion, that perfidious place,  
He breaks his faith with half the' ethereal race;  
Give him to know, unless the Grecian train  
Lay yon proud structures level with the plain,  
Howe'er the' offence by other gods be pass'd,  
The wrath of Neptune shall for ever last.’

Thus speaking, furious from the field he strode,  
And plunged into the bosom of the flood.

The lord of thunders from his lofty height  
Beheld, and thus bespake the source of light—

‘ Behold! the god whose liquid arms are hurl’d  
Around the globe, whose earthquakes rock the  
Desists at length his rebel war to wage, [world,  
Seeks his own seas, and trembles at our rage ;  
Else had my wrath, heaven’s thrones all shaking  
round,

Burn’d to the bottom of the seas profound ;  
And all the gods that round old Saturn dwell  
Had heard the thunders to the deeps of hell.  
Well was the crime, and well the vengeance spared ;  
E’en power immense had found such battle hard.  
Go thou, my son ! the trembling Greeks alarm,  
Shake my broad ægis on thy active arm,  
Be godlike Hector thy peculiar care,  
Swell his bold heart, and urge his strength to war :  
Let Ilion conquer, till the’ Achaian train  
Fly to their ships and Hellespont again :  
Then Greece shall breathe from toils.’—The god-  
head said ;

His will divine the son of Jove obey’d.  
Not half so swift the sailing falcon flies,  
That drives a turtle through the liquid skies,  
As Phœbus, shooting from the’ Idæan brow,  
Glides down the mountain to the plain below.  
There Hector seated by the stream he sees,  
His sense returning with the coming breeze ;  
Again his pulses beat, his spirits rise ;  
Again his loved companions meet his eyes ;  
Jove thinking of his pains, they pass’d away.  
To whom the god who gives the golden day—

‘ Why sits great Hector from the field so far ?  
What grief, what wound, withholds thee from  
the war ?’

The fainting hero, as the vision bright  
Stood shining o'er him, half unseal'd his sight :  
' What bless'd immortal, with commanding breath,  
Thus wakens Heetor from the sleep of death ?  
His fame not told, how, while my trusty sword  
Bathed Greece in slaughter, and her battle gored,  
The mighty Ajax with a deadly blow  
Had almost sunk me to the shades below ?  
E'en yet, methinks, the gliding ghosts I spy,  
And hell's black horrors swim before my eye.'

To him Apollo—' Be no more dismay'd ;  
See, and be strong ! the thunderer gives thee aid.  
Behold ! thy Phœbus shall his arms employ,  
Phœbus, propitious still to thee and Troy.  
Inspire thy warriors then with manly force,  
And to the ships impel thy rapid horse :  
E'en I will make thy fiery coursers way,  
And drive the Grecians headlong to the sea.'

Thus to bold Hector spoke the son of Jove,  
And breathed immortal ardour from above.  
As when the pamper'd steed, with reins unbound,  
Breaks from his stall, and pours along the ground ;  
With ample strokes he rushes to the flood,  
To bathe his sides, and cool his fiery blood ;  
His head, now freed, he tosses to the skies,  
His mane dishevel'd o'er his shoulders flies ;  
He snuffs the females in the well known plain,  
And springs, exulting, to his fields again ;  
Urged by the voice divine, thus Hector flew,  
Full of the god : and all his hosts pursue.  
As when the force of men and dogs combined  
Invade the mountain goat, or branching hind ;  
Far from the hunter's rage secure they lie  
Close in the rock (not fated yet to die) ;

When lo ! a lion shoots across the way !  
They fly : at once the chasers and the prey.  
So Greece, that late in conquering troops pursued ;  
And mark'd their progress through the ranks in  
Soon as they see the furious chief appear, [blood ;  
Forget to vanquish, and consent to fear.

Thoäs with grief observed his dreadful course,  
Thoäs, the bravest of the' Ætolian force ;  
Skill'd to direct the javelin's distant flight,  
And bold to combat in the standing fight,  
Nor more in councils famed for solid sense  
Than winning words, and heavenly eloquence.  
' Gods ! what portent (he cried) these eyes invades ?  
Lo ! Hector rises from the Stygian shades !  
We saw him, late, by thundering Ajax kill'd :  
What god restores him to the frighted field ;  
And not content that half of Greece lie slain,  
Pours new destruction on her sons again ?  
He comes not, Jove ! without thy powerful will ;  
Lo ! still he lives, pursues, and conquers still !  
Yet hear my counsel, and his worst withstand :  
The Greeks' main body to the fleet command ;  
But let the few whom brisker spirits warm  
Stand the first onset, and provoke the storm.  
Thus point your arms ; and when such foes appear,  
Fierce as he is, let Hector learn to fear.'

The warrior spoke ; the listening Greeks obey,  
Thickening their ranks, and form a deep array.

Each Ajax, Teucer, Merion, gave command,  
The valiant leader of the Cretan band ;  
And Mars-like Meges : these the chiefs excite,  
Approach the foe, and meet the coming fight.  
Behind, unnumber'd multitudes attend,  
To flank the navy, and the shores defend.

Full on the front the pressing Trojans bear,  
And Hector first came towering to the war.  
Phœbus himself the rushing battle led;  
A veil of clouds involved his radiant head;  
High held before him, Jove's enormous shield  
Portentous shone, and shaded all the field;  
Vulcan to Jove the immortal gift consign'd,  
To scatter hosts, and terrify mankind.

The Greeks expect the shock, the clamours rise  
From different parts, and mingle in the skies.  
Dire was the hiss of darts, by heroes flung,  
And arrows leaping from the bowstring sung;  
These drink the life of generous warriors slain;  
Those guiltless fall, and thirst for blood in vain.  
As long as Phœbus bore unmoved the shield,  
Sat doubtful Conquest hovering o'er the field;  
But when aloft he shakes it in the skies,  
Shouts in their ears, and lightens in their eyes,  
Deep horror seizes every Grecian breast,  
Their force is humbled, and their fear confess'd.  
So flies a herd of oxen, scatter'd wide,  
No swain to guard them, and no day to guide,  
When two fell lions from the mountain come,  
And spread the carnage through the shady gloom.  
Impending Phœbus pours around them fear,  
And Troy and Hector thunder in the rear.  
Heaps fall on heaps: the slaughter Hector leads;  
First great Arcesilas, then Stichius bleeds;  
One to the bold Bœotians ever dear,  
And one Menestheus' friend and famed compeer.  
Medon and Iasus, Æneas sped;  
This sprung from Phelus, and the' Athenians led;  
But hapless Medon from Oileus came;  
Him Ajax honour'd with a brother's name,

Though born of lawless love: from home expell'd,  
A banish'd man, in Phylacè he dwell'd,  
Press'd by the vengeance of an angry wife;  
Troy ends at last his labours and his life.  
Mecystes next Polydamas o'erthrew;  
And thee, brave Clonius, great Agenor slew.  
By Paris, Deiochus inglorious dies,  
Pierced through the shoulder as he basely flies.  
Polites' arm laid Echius on the plain;  
Stretch'd on one heap, the victors spoil the slain.  
The Greeks dismay'd, confused, disperse or fall,  
Some seek the trench, some skulk behind the wall.  
While these fly trembling, others pant for breath,  
And o'er the slaughter stalks gigantic death.  
On rush'd bold Hector, gloomy as the night;  
Forbids to plunder, animates the fight,  
Points to the fleet: 'For by the gods, who flies,  
Who dares but linger, by this hand he dies;  
No weeping sister his cold eye shall close,  
No friendly hand his funeral pyre compose.  
Who stops to plunder at this signal hour,  
The birds shall tear him, and the dogs devour.'

Furious he said; the smarting scourge resounds;  
The coursers fly; the smoking chariot bounds;  
The hosts rush on; loud clamours shake the shore;  
The horses thunder, earth and ocean roar!  
Apollo, planted at the trench's bound, [mound :  
Push'd at the bank: down sunk the' enormous  
Roll'd in the ditch the heapy ruin lay;  
A sudden road! a long and ample way.  
O'er the dread fosse (a late impervious space)  
Now steeds, and men, and cars, tumultuous pass.  
The wondering crowds the downward level trod;  
Before them flamed the shield, and march'd the god.

Then with his hand he shook the mighty wall;  
And lo! the turrets nod, the bulwarks fall:  
Easy, as when ashore an infant stands,  
And draws imagined houses in the sands;  
The sportive wanton, pleased with some new play,  
Sweeps the slight works and fashion'd domes  
away:

Thus vanish'd, at the touch, the towers and walls;  
The toil of thousands in a moment falls.

The Grecians gaze around with wild despair,  
Confused, and weary all the powers with prayer;  
Exhort their men, with praises, threats, commands;  
And urge the gods, with voices, eyes, and hands.  
Experienced Nestor chief obtests the skies,  
And weeps his country with a father's eyes:

‘ O Jove! if ever, on his native shore,  
One Greek enrich'd thy shrine with offer'd gore;  
If e'er, in hope our country to behold,  
We paid the fattest firstlings of the fold;  
If e'er thou sign'st our wishes with thy nod;  
Perform the promise of a gracious god!  
This day preserve our navies from the flame,  
And save the relics of the Grecian name.’

Thus pray'd the sage: the' eternal gave consent,  
And peals of thunder shook the firmament.  
Presumptuous Troy mistook the' accepting sign,  
And catch'd new fury at the voice divine.  
As, when black tempests mix the seas and skies,  
The roaring deeps in watery mountains rise,  
Above the sides of some tall ship ascend,  
Its womb they deluge, and its ribs they rend;  
Thus loudly roaring, and o'erpowering all,  
Mount the thick Trojans up the Grecian wall;  
Legions on legions from each side arise:  
Thick sound the keels; the storm of arrows flies.

Fierce on the ships above, the cars below,  
These wield the mace, and those the javelin throw.

While thus the thunder of the battle raged,  
And labouring armies round the works engaged,  
Still in the tent Patroclus sat to tend  
The good Eurypylus, his wounded friend.  
He sprinkles healing balms, to anguish kind,  
And adds discourse, the medicine of the mind.  
But when he saw, ascending up the fleet,  
Victorious Troy; then starting from his seat,  
With bitter groans his sorrows he express'd,  
He wrings his hands, he beats his manly breast.  
'Though yet thy state require redress '(he cries)  
Depart I must: what horrors strike my eyes!  
Charged with Achilles' high commands I go,  
A mournful witness of this scene of woe:  
I haste to urge him by his country's care  
To rise in arms, and shine again in war.  
Perhaps some favouring god his soul may bend;  
The voice is powerful of a faithful friend.'

He spoke; and, speaking, swifter than the wind  
Sprung from the tent, and left the war behind.  
The embodied Greeks the fierce attack sustain,  
But strive, though numerous, to repulse in vain:  
Nor could the Trojans, through that firm array,  
Force to the fleet and tents the impervious way.  
As when a shipwright, with Palladian art,  
Smooths the rough wood, and levels every part;  
With equal hand he guides his whole design,  
By the just rule, and the directing line;  
The martial leaders, with like skill and care,  
Preserved their line, and equal kept the war.  
Brave deeds of arms through all the ranks were  
tried,  
And every ship sustain'd an equal tide.

At one proud bark, high towering o'er the fleet,  
Ajax the great, and godlike Hector meet;  
For one bright prize the matchless chiefs contend,  
Nor this the ships can fire, nor that defend:  
One kept the shore, and one the vessel trod;  
That fix'd as Fate, this acted by a god.  
The son of Clytius in his daring hand,  
The deck approaching, shakes a flaming brand;  
But pierc'd by Telamon's huge lance expires:  
Thundering he falls, and drops the extinguished  
fires.

Great Hector view'd him with a sad survey,  
As stretch'd in dust before the stern he lay.  
‘ Oh ! all of Trojan, all of Lycian race !  
Stand to your arms, maintain this arduous space :  
Lo ! where the son of royal Clytius lies ;  
Ah save his arms, secure his obsequies !’

This said, his eager javelin sought the foe :  
But Ajax shunn'd the meditated blow.  
Not vainly yet the forceful lance was thrown ;  
It stretch'd in dust unhappy Lycophron :  
An exile long, sustain'd at Ajax' board,  
A faithful servant to a foreign lord ;  
In peace, in war, for ever at his side,  
Near his loved master, as he lived, he died.  
From the high poop he tumbles on the sand,  
And lies a lifeless load along the land.  
With anguish Ajax views the piercing sight,  
And thus inflames his brother to the fight :

‘ Tencer, behold ! extended on the shore  
Our friend, our loved companion ! now no more !  
Dear as a parent, with a parent's care  
To fight our wars he left his native air.  
This death deplored, to Hector's rage we owe ;  
Revenge, revenge it on the cruel foe.

Where are those darts on which the Fates attend?  
And where the bow which Phœbus taught to bend?"

Impatient Teucer, hastening to his aid,  
Before the chief his ample bow display'd;  
The well stored quiver on his shoulders hung:  
Then hiss'd his arrow, and the bowstring sung.  
Clytus, Pisenor's son, renown'd in fame,  
(To thee, Polydamas! an honour'd name)  
Drove through the thickest of the embattled plains  
The startling steeds, and shook his eager reins.  
As all on glory ran his ardent mind,  
The pointed death arrests him from behind:  
Through his fair neck the thrilling arrow flies;  
In youth's first bloom reluctantly he dies.  
Hurl'd from the lofty seat, at distance far,  
The headlong coursers spurn his empty car;  
Till sad Polydamas the steeds restrain'd,  
And gave, Astynous, to thy careful hand;  
Then, fired to vengeance, rush'd amidst the foe;  
Rage edged his sword, and strengthen'd every  
blow.

Once more bold Teucer, in his country's cause,  
At Hector's breast a chosen arrow draws;  
And had the weapon found the destined way,  
Thy fall, great Trojan! had renown'd that day.  
But Hector was not doom'd to perish then:  
The all-wise disposer of the fates of men  
(Imperial Jove) his present death withstands;  
Nor was such glory due to Teucer's hands.  
At its full stretch as the tough string he drew,  
Struck'by an arm unseen, it burst in two;  
Down dropp'd the bow: the shaft with brazen head  
Fell innocent, and on the dust lay dead.  
The astonish'd archer to great Ajax cries;  
‘ Some god prevents our destined enterprise:

Some god, propitious to the Trojan foe,  
Has from my arm unfailing, struck the bow,  
And broke the nerve my hands had twined with art,  
Strong to impel the flight of many a dart.'

‘Since Heaven commands it (Ajax made reply)  
Dismiss the bow, and lay thy arrows by;  
Thy arms no less suffice the lance to wield,  
And quit the quiver for the ponderous shield.  
In the first ranks indulge thy thirst of fame,  
Thy brave example shall the rest inflame.  
Fierce as they are, by long successes vain;  
To force our fleet, or e'en a ship to gain,  
Asks toil, and sweat, and blood: their utmost  
might

Shall find its match—no more: ’tis ours to fight.’

Then Teucer laid his faithless bow aside;  
The fourfold buckler o'er his shoulder tied;  
On his brave head a crested helm he placed,  
With nodding horse-hair formidably graced;  
A dart, whose point with brass resplendent shines,  
The warrior wields; and his great brother joins.

This Hector saw, and thus express'd his joy—  
‘Ye troops of Lycia, Dardanus, and Troy!  
Be mindful of yourselves, your ancient fame,  
And spread your glory with the navy's flame.  
Jove is with us; I saw his hand, but now,  
From the proud archer strike his vaunted bow:  
Indulgent Jove! how plain thy favours shine,  
When happy nations bear the marks divine!  
How easy then, to see the sinking state  
Of realms accursed, deserted, reprobate!  
Such is the fate of Greece, and such is ours:  
Behold, ye warriors, and exert your powers.  
Death is the worst; a fate which all must try;  
And, for our country, ’tis a bliss to die.

The gallant man, though slain in fight he be,  
Yet leaves his nation safe, his children free;  
Entails a debt on all the grateful state;  
His own brave friends shall glory in his fate;  
His wife live honour'd, all his race succeed;  
And late posterity enjoy the deed!"

This roused the soul in every Trojan breast:  
The godlike Ajax next his Greeks address'd:

‘ How long, ye warriors of the Argive race,  
(To generous Argos what a dire disgrace!)  
How long, on these cursed confines will ye lie,  
Yet undetermined, or to live or die!  
What hopes remain, what methods to retire,  
If once your vessels catch the Trojan fire?  
Mark how the flames approach, how near they fall,  
How Hector calls, and Troy obeys his call!  
Not to the dance that dreadful voice invites,  
It calls to death, and all the rage of fights.  
‘ Tis now no time for wisdom or debates;  
To your own hands are trusted all your fates;  
And better far, in one decisive strife,  
One day should end our labour or our life,  
Than keep this hard-got inch of barren sands,  
Still press'd, and press'd by such inglorious hands.’

The listening Grecians feel their leader's flame,  
And every kindling bosom pants for fame.  
Then mutual slaughterers spread on either side;  
By Hector here the Phocian Schedius died;  
There, pierced by Ajax, sunk Laodamas,  
Chief of the foot, of old Antenor's race.  
Polydamas laid Otus on the sand,  
The fierce commander of the' Epeian band.  
His lance bold Meges at the victor threw;  
The victor, stooping, from the death withdrew;

(That valued life, O Phœbus! was thy care)  
But Crœsmus' bosom took the flying spear:  
His corpse fell bleeding on the slippery shore;  
His radiant arms triumphant Meges bore.  
Dolops, the son of Lampus, rushes on,  
Sprung from the race of old Laomedon,  
And famed for prowess in a well-fought field;  
He pierced the centre of his sounding shield:  
But Meges, Phyleus' ample breastplate wore,  
(Well-known in fight on Selleïs' winding shore;  
For king Euphetes gave the golden mail,  
Compact, and firm, with many a jointed scale)  
Which oft, in cities storm'd, and battles won,  
Had saved the father, and now saves the son.  
Full at the Trojan's head he urged his lance,  
Where the high plumes above the helmet dance,  
New tinged with Tyrian dye: in dust below,  
Shorn from the crest, the purple honours glow.  
Meantime their fight the Spartan king survey'd,  
And stood by Meges' side, a sudden aid,  
Through Dolops' shoulder urged his forceful dart,  
Which held its passage through the panting heart,  
And issued at his breast. With thundering sound  
The warrior falls, extended on the ground.  
In rush the conquering Greeks to spoil the slain:  
But Hector's voice excites his kindred train;  
The hero most, from Hicetaon sprung,  
Fierce Melanippus, gallant, brave, and young.  
He (ere to Troy the Grecians cross'd the main)  
Fed his large oxen on Percotè's plain;  
But when, oppress'd, his country claim'd his care,  
Return'd to Ilion, and excell'd in war;  
For this, in Priam's court, he held his place,  
Beloved no less than Priam's royal race.

Him Hector singled, as his troops he led,  
And thus inflamed him, pointing to the dead—

‘ Lo, Melanippus! lo, where Dolops lies;  
And is it thus our royal kinsman dies?  
O’ermatch’d he falls; to two at once a prey,  
And lo! they bear the bloody arms away!  
Come on—a distant war no longer wage,  
But hand to hand thy country’s foes engage:  
Till Greece at once, and all her glory end;  
Or Ilion from her towery height descend,  
Heaved from the lowest stone; and bury all  
In one sad sepulchre, one common fall.’

Hector (this said) rush’d forward on the foes:  
With equal ardour Melanippus glows:  
Then Ajax thus—‘ O Greeks respect your fame,  
Respect yourselves, and learn an honest shame:  
Let mutual reverence mutual warmth inspire,  
And catch from breast to breast the noble fire.  
On valour’s side the odds of combat lie,  
The brave live glorious, or lamented die;  
The wretch that trembles in the field of fame,  
Meets death, and worse than death, eternal shame.’

His generous sense he not in vain imparts;  
It sunk, and rooted in the Grecian hearts:  
They join, they throng, they thicken at his call,  
And flank the navy with a brazen wall;  
Shields touching shields, in order blaze above,  
And stop the Trojans, though impell’d by Jove.  
The fiery Spartan first, with loud applause,  
Warms the bold son of Nestor in his cause.  
‘ Is there (he said) in arms a youth like you,  
So strong to fight, so active to pursue?  
Why stand you distant, nor attempt a deed?  
Lift the bold lance, and make some Trojan bleed.’

He said ; and backward to the lines retired ;  
Forth rush'd the youth, with martial fury fired,  
Beyond the foremost ranks ; his lance he threw,  
And round the black battalions cast his view.  
The troops of Troy recede with sudden fear,  
While the swift javelin hiss'd along in air.  
Advancing Melanippus met the dart  
With his bold breast, and felt it in his heart :  
Thundering he falls ; his falling arms resound,  
And his broad buckler rings against the ground.  
The victor leaps upon his prostrate prize :  
Thus on a roe the well-breathed beagle flies,  
And rends his side, fresh bleeding with the dart  
The distant hunter sent into his heart.  
Observing Hector to the rescue flew ;  
Bold as he was, Antilochus withdrew.  
So when a savage, ranging o'er the plain,  
Has torn the shepherd's dog, or shepherd swain,  
While conscious of the deed, he glares around,  
And hears the gathering multitude resound,  
Timely he flies the yet untasted food,  
And gains the friendly shelter of the wood ;  
So fears the youth ; all Troy with shouts pursue,  
While stones and darts in mingled tempest flew ;  
But enter'd in the Grecian ranks, he turns  
His manly breast, and with new fury burns.

Now on the fleet the tides of Trojans drove,  
Fierce to fulfil the stern decrees of Jove :  
The sire of gods, confirming Thetis' prayer,  
The Grecian ardour quench'd in deep despair ;  
But lifts to glory Troy's prevailing bands,  
Swells all their hearts, and strengthens all their  
hands.

On Ida's top he waits with longing eyes,  
To view the navy blazing to the skies ;

Then, nor till then, the scale of war shall turn,  
The Trojans fly, and conquer'd Ilion burn.  
These fates revolved in his almighty mind,  
He raises Hector to the work design'd,  
Bids him with more than mortal fury glow,  
And drives him, like a lightning, on the foe.  
So Mars, when human crimes for vengeance call,  
Shakes his huge javelin, and whole armies fall.  
Not with more rage a conflagration rolls,  
Wraps the vast mountains, and involves the poles :  
He foams with wrath ; beneath his gloomy brow  
Like fiery meteors his red eyeballs glow ;  
The radiant helmet on his temples burns,  
Waves when he nods, and lightens as he turns :  
For Jove his splendour round the chief had thrown,  
And cast the blaze of both the hosts on one.  
Unhappy glories ! for his fate was near,  
Due to stern Pallas, and Pelides' spear :  
Yet Jove deferr'd the death he was to pay,  
And gave what Fate allow'd, the honours of a day !

Now all on fire for fame, his breast, his eyes  
Burn at each foe, and single every prize ;  
Still at the closest ranks, the thickest fight,  
He points his ardour, and exerts his might.  
The Grecian phalanx, moveless as a tower,  
On all sides batter'd, yet resists his power :  
So some tall rock o'erhangs the hoary main,  
By winds assail'd, by billows beat in vain,  
Unmoved it hears, above, the tempest blow,  
And sees the watery mountains break below.  
Girt in surrounding flames, he seems to fall  
Like fire from Jove, and bursts upon them all :  
Bursts as a wave that from the clouds impends,  
And swell'd with tempests on the ship descends ;

White are the decks with foam ; the winds aloud  
Howl o'er the masts, and sing through every  
shroud ;

Pale, trembling, tired, the sailors freeze with fears ;  
And instant death on every wave appears ;—  
So pale the Greeks the eyes of Hector meet,  
The chief so thunders, and so shakes the fleet.

As when a lion rushing from his den,  
Amidst the plain of some wide-water'd fen,  
(Where numerous oxen, as at ease they feed,  
At large expatiate o'er the ranker mead)  
Leaps on the herds before the herdsman's eyes ;  
The trembling herdsman far to distance flies ;  
Some lordly bull (the rest dispersed and fled)  
He singles out, arrests, and lays him dead ;  
Thus from the rage of Jove-like Hector flew  
All Greece in heaps ; but one he seized, and slew :  
Mycenian Periphes, a mighty name,  
In wisdom great, in arms well known to fame ;  
The minister of stern Eurystheus' ire,  
Against Alcides ; Copreus was his sire :  
The son redeem'd the honours of the race,  
A son as generous as the sire was base ;  
O'er all his country's youth conspicuous far  
In every virtue, or of peace or war :  
But doom'd to Hector's stronger force to yield !  
Against the margin of his ample shield  
He struck his hasty foot : his heels up-sprung ;  
Supine he fell ; his brazen helmet rung.  
On the fallen chief the' invading Trojan press'd,  
And plung'd the pointed javelin in his breast.  
His circling friends, who strove to guard, too late,  
The' unhappy hero, fled, or shared his fate.

Chased from the foremost line, the Grecian train  
Now man the next, receding toward the main :

Wedged in one body at the tents they stand,  
Wall'd round with sterns, a gloomy desperate  
band.

Now manly shame forbids the' inglorious flight ;  
Now fear itself confines them to the fight :  
Man courage breathes in man ; but Nestor most  
(The sage preserver of the Grecian host)  
Exhorts, adjures, to guard these utmost shores ;  
And by their parents, by themselves, implores.

‘ O friends ! be men : your generous breasts  
inflame

With mutual honour, and with mutual shame !  
Think of your hopes, your fortunes ; all the care  
Your wives, your infants, and your parents, share :  
Think of each living father's reverend head :  
Think of each ancestor with glory dead ;  
Absent, by me they speak, by me they sue ;  
They ask their safety, and their fame, from you :  
The gods their fates on this one action lay,  
And all are lost, if you desert the day.’

He spoke, and round him breathed heroic fires ;  
Minerva seconds what the sage inspires.  
The mist of darkness Jove around them threw  
She clear'd, restoring all the war to view ;  
A sudden ray shot beaming o'er the plain,  
And show'd the shores, the navy, and the main :  
Hector they saw, and all who fly, or fight,  
The scene wide opening to the blaze of light.  
First of the field great Ajax strikes their eyes,  
His port majestic, and his ample size :  
A ponderous mace with studs of iron crown'd,  
Full twenty cubits long, he swings around ;  
Nor fights, like others, fix'd to certain stands,  
But looks a moving tower above the bands ;

High on the decks, with vast gigantic stride,  
The godlike hero stalks from side to side.  
So when a horseman from the watery mead  
(Skill'd in the manage of the bounding steed)  
Drives four fair coursers, practised to obey,  
To some great city through the public way ;  
Safe in his art, as side by side they run,  
He shifts his seat, and vaults from one to one ;  
And now to this, and now to that he flies ;  
Admiring numbers follow with their eyes.

From ship to ship thus Ajax swiftly flew,  
No less the wonder of the warring crew.  
As furious, Hector thunder'd threats aloud,  
And rush'd enraged before the Trojan crowd :  
Then swift invades the ships, whose beaky prores  
Lay rank'd contiguous on the bending shores.  
So the strong eagle from his airy height,  
Who marks the swans' or cranes' embodied flight,  
Stoops down impetuous, while they light for food,  
And, stooping, darkens with his wings the flood.  
Jove leads him on with his almighty hand,  
And breathes fierce spirits in his following band.  
The warring nations meet, the battle roars,  
Thick beats the combat on the sounding prores.  
Thou wouldest have thought, so furious was their  
fire,  
No force could tame them, and no toil could tire ;  
As if new vigour from new fights they won,  
And the long battle was but then begun.  
Greece, yet unconquer'd, kept alive the war,  
Secure of death, confiding in despair ;  
Troy in proud hopes already view'd the main  
Bright with the blaze, and red with heroes slain :  
Like strength is felt from hope, and from despair,  
And each contends, as his were all the war.

’Twas thou, bold Hector! whose resistless hand  
First seized a ship on that contested strand;  
The same which dead Protesilaüs bore,  
The first that touch’d the’ unhappy Trojan shore:  
For this in arms the warring nations stood,  
And bathed their generous breasts with mutual  
blood.

No room to poise the lance or bend the bow;  
But hand to hand, and man to man, they grow:  
Wounded, they wound; and seek each other’s  
hearts

With falchions, axes, swords, and shorten’d darts.  
The falchions ring, shields rattle, axes sound,  
Swords flash in air, or glitter on the ground;  
With streaming blood the slippery shores are dyed  
And slaughter’d heroes swell the dreadful tide.

Still raging, Hector with his ample hand  
Grasps the high stern, and gives this loud com-  
mand— [years

‘ Haste, bring the flames! the toil of ten long  
Is finish’d; and the day desired appears!  
This happy day with acclamations greet,  
Bright with destruction of yon hostile fleet.  
The coward counsels of a timorous throng  
Of reverend dotards check’d our glory long:  
Too long Jove lull’d us with lethargic charms,  
But now in peals of thunder calls to arms:  
In this great day he crowns our full desires,  
Wakes all our force, and seconds all our fires.’

He spoke—the warriors at his fierce command,  
Pour a new deluge on the Grecian band.  
E’en Ajax paused (so thick the javelins fly),  
Stepp’d back, and doubted or to live or die.  
Yet, where the oars are placed, he stands to wait  
What chief approaching dares attempt his fate:

E'en to the last, his naval charge defends,  
Now shakes his spear, now lifts, and now pretends;  
E'en yet, the Greeks with piercing shouts inspires,  
Amidst attacks, and deaths, and darts, and fires.

‘ O friends! O heroes! names for ever dear,  
Once sons of Mars, and thunderbolts of war!  
Ah! yet be mindful of your old renown,  
Your great forefathers’ virtues and your own.  
What aids expect you in this utmost strait?  
What bulwarks rising between you and Fate?  
No aids, no bulwarks your retreat attend,  
No friends to help, no city to defend.  
This spot is all you have, to lose or keep;  
There stand the Trojans, and here rolls the deep.  
‘ Tis hostile ground you tread; your native lands  
Far, far from hence: your fates are in your hands.’

Raging he spoke: nor further wastes his breath,  
But turns his javelin to the work of death.  
Whate’er bold Trojan arm’d his daring hands,  
Against the sable ships, with flaming brands,  
So well the chief his naval weapon sped,  
The luckless warrior at his stern lay dead:  
Full twelve, the boldest, in a moment fell,  
Sent by great Ajax to the shades of hell.

## BOOK XVI.

## The Argument.

## THE SIXTH BATTLE : THE ACTS AND DEATH OF PATROCLUS.

Patroclus (in pursuance of the request of Nestor in the eleventh book) entreats Achilles to suffer him to go to the assistance of the Greeks with Achilles's troops and armour. He agrees to it, but at the same time charges him to content himself with rescuing the fleet, without further pursuit of the enemy. The armour, horses, soldiers, and officers are described. Achilles offers a libation for the success of his friend, after which Patroclus leads the Myrmidons to battle. The Trojans, at the sight of Patroclus in Achilles's armour, taking him for that hero, are cast into the utmost consternation ; he beats them off from the vessels, Hector himself flies, Sarpedon is killed, though Jupiter was averse to his fate. Several other particulars of the battle are described ; in the heat of which, Patroclus, neglecting the orders of Achilles, pursues the foe to the walls of Troy ; where Apollo repulses and disarms him, Euphorbus wounds him, and Hector kills him : which concludes the book.

So warr'd both armies on the' ensanguined shore,  
While the black vessels smoked with human gore.  
Meantime Patroclus to Achilles flies ;  
The streaming tears fall copious from his eyes ;  
Not faster, trickling to the plains below,  
From the tall rock the sable waters flow.  
Divine Pelides, with compassion moved,  
Thus spoke, indulgent, to his best beloved.

‘ Patroclus, say, what grief thy bosom bears,  
That flows so fast in these unmanly tears ?  
No girl, no infant whom the mother keeps  
From her loved breast, with fonder passion weeps :

Not more the mother's soul that infant warms,  
 Clung to her knees, and reaching at her arms,  
 Than thou hast mine! Oh tell me, to what end  
 Thy melting sorrows thus pursue thy friend?

‘ Grievest thou for me, or for my martial band?  
 Or come sad tidings from our native land?  
 Our fathers live (our first, most tender care),  
 Thy good Menœtius breathes the vital air,  
 And hoary Peleus yet extends his days;  
 Pleased in their age to hear their children's praise.  
 Or may some meaner cause thy pity claim?  
 Perhaps yon reliques of the Grecian name,  
 Doom'd in their ships to sink by fire and sword,  
 And pay the forfeit of their hanghty lord?  
 Whate'er the cause, reveal thy secret care,  
 And speak those sorrows which a friend would  
 share.’

A sigh that instant from his bosom broke,  
 Another follow'd, and Patroclus spoke: [breast,  
 ‘ Let Greece at length with pity touch thy  
 Thyself a Greek; and, once, of Greeks the best!  
 Lo! every chief that might her fate prevent,  
 Lies pierced with wounds, and bleeding in his tent:  
 Eurypylus, Tydides, Atreus' son,  
 And wise Ulysses, at the navy groan,  
 More for their country's wounds, than for their own.  
 Their pain soft arts of pharmacy can ease,  
 Thy breast alone no lenitives appease.  
 May never rage like thine my soul enslave,  
 O great in vain! unprofitably brave!  
 Thy country slighted in her last distress,  
 What friend, what man, from thee shall hope re-  
 No—men unborn, and ages yet behind, [dress?  
 Shall curse that fierce, that unforgiving mind.

‘ O man unpitying! if of man thy race;  
But sure thou spring’st not from the soft embrace,  
Nor ever amorous hero caused thy birth,  
Nor ever tender goddess brought thee forth:  
Some rugged rock’s hard entrails gave thee form,  
And raging seas produced thee in a storm;  
A soul well suiting that tempestuous kind,  
So rough thy manners, so untamed thy mind.

‘ If some dire oracle thy breast alarm,  
If aught from Jove, or Thétis, stop thy arm,  
Some beam of comfort yet on Greece may shine  
If I but lead the Myrmidonian line:  
Clad in thy dreadful arms if I appear,  
Proud Troy shall tremble, and desert the war:  
Without thy person Greece shall win the day,  
And thy mere image chase her foes away.  
Press’d by fresh forces, her o’erlabour’d train  
Shall quit the ships, and Greece respire again.’

Thus, blind to Fate! with supplicating breath,  
Thou begg’st his arms, and in his arms thy death.  
Unfortunately good! a boding sigh  
Thy friend return’d; and with it this reply.

‘ Patroclus! thy Achilles knows no fears,  
Nor words from Jove, nor oracles he hears;  
Nor aught a mother’s caution can suggest;  
The tyrant’s pride lies rooted in my breast.  
My wrongs, my wrongs, my constant thought on—  
Those, my sole oracles, inspire my rage: [gage,  
I made him tyrant: gave him power to wrong  
E’en me: I felt it; and shall feel it long,  
The maid, my black-eyed maid, he forced away,  
Due to the toils of many a well-fought day;  
Due to my conquest of her father’s reign;  
Due to the votes of all the Grecian train.

From me he forced her; me, the bold and brave,  
Disgraced, dishonour'd, like the meanest slave.  
But bear we this—the wrongs I grieve are pass'd;  
'Tis time our fury should relent at last:  
I fix'd its date; the day I wish'd appears:  
Now Hector to my ships his battle bears,  
The flames my eyes, the shouts invade my ears.  
Go then, Patroclus! court fair honour's charms  
In Troy's famed fields, and in Achilles' arms:  
Lead forth my martial Myrmidons to fight,  
Go save the fleets, and conquer in my right.  
See the thin reliques of their baffled band  
At the last edge of yon deserted land!  
Behold all Ilion on their ships descends;  
How the cloud blackens, how the storm impends!  
It was not thus, when, at my sight amazed,  
Troy saw and trembled, as this helmet blazed:  
Had not the' injurious king our friendship lost,  
Yon ample trench had buried half her host.  
No camps, no bulwarks now the Trojans fear,  
Those are not dreadful, no Achilles there;  
No longer flames the lance of Tydeus' son;  
No more your general calls his heroes on;  
Hector, alone, I hear; his dreadful breath  
Commands your slaughter, or proclaims your  
Yet now, Patroclus, issue to the plain; [death.  
Now save the ships, the rising fires restrain,  
And give the Greeks to visit Greece again.  
But heed my words, and mark a friend's command,  
Who trusts his fame and honours in thy hand,  
And from thy deeds expects the' Achaian host  
Shall render back the beanteons maid he lost:  
Rage uncontroll'd through all the hostile crew,  
But touch not Hector, Hector is my due.

Though Jove in thunder should command the war,  
Be just, consult my glory, and forbear.  
The fleet once saved, desist from further chase,  
Nor lead to Ilion's walls the Grecian race;  
Some adverse god thy rashness may destroy;  
Some god, like Phœbus, ever kind to Troy.  
Let Greece, redeem'd from this destructive strait,  
Do her own work; and leave the rest to Fate.  
O! woul'd to all the' immortal powers above,  
Apollo, Pallas, and almighty Jove !  
That not one Trojan might be left alive,  
And not a Greek of all the race survive:  
Might only we the last destruction shun,  
And only we destroy the' accursed town !'

Such conference held the chiefs; while on the  
strand

Great Jove with conquest crown'd the Trojan  
band.

Ajax no more the sounding storm sustain'd,  
So thick the darts an iron tempest rain'd:  
On his tired arm the weighty buckler hung;  
His hollow helm with falling javelins rung;  
His breath, in quick, short pantings, comes and  
goes;

And painful sweat from all his members flows.  
Spent and o'erpower'd, he barely breathes atmost;  
Yet scarce an army stirs him from his post:  
Dangers on dangers all around him grow,  
And toil to toil, and woe succeeds to woe.

Say, Muses, throned above the starry frame,  
How first the navy blazed with Trojan flame?

Stern Hector waved his sword: and standing  
Where furious Ajax plied his ashen spear, [near  
Full on the lance a stroke so justly sped,  
That the broad falchion lopp'd its brazen head:

His pointless spear the warrior shakes in vain;  
The brazen head falls sounding on the plain.  
Great Ajax saw, and own'd the hand divine,  
Confessing Jove, and trembling at the sign;  
Warn'd, he retreats. Then swift from all sides pour  
The hissing brands; thick streams the fiery  
shower;

O'er the high stern the curling volumes rise,  
And sheets of rolling smoke involve the skies.

Divine Achilles view'd the rising flames,  
And smote his thigh, and thus aloud exclaims.  
'Arm, arm, Patroclus! Lo, the blaze aspires!  
The glowing ocean reddens with the fires.  
Arm, ere our vessels catch the spreading flame;  
Arm, ere the Grecians be no more a name;  
I haste to bring the troops'—The hero said;  
The friend with ardour and with joy obey'd.

He cased his limbs in brass; and first around  
His manly legs with silver buckles bound  
The clasping greaves; then to his breast applies  
The flaming cuirass of a thousand dyes;  
Emblazed with studs of gold his falchion shone  
In the rich belt, as in a starry zone:  
Achilles' shield his ample shoulders spread,  
Achilles' helmet nodded o'er his head:  
Adorn'd in all his terrible array,  
He flash'd around intolerable day.  
Alone untouch'd Pelides' javelin stands,  
Not to be poised but by Pelides' hands:  
From Pelion's shady brow the plant entire  
Old Chiron rent, and shaped it for his sire;  
Whose son's great arm alone the weapon wields,  
The death of heroes, and the dread of fields.

Then brave Automedon (an honour'd name,  
The second to his lord in love and fame,

In peace his friend, and partner of the war)  
The winged coursers harness'd to the car;  
Xanthus and Balius, of immortal breed,  
Sprung from the wind, and like the wind in speed;  
Whom the wing'd harpy, swift Podarge, bore,  
By Zephyr pregnant on the breezy shore:  
Swift Pegasus was added to their side,  
(Once great Aëtion's, now Achilles' pride)  
Who, like in strength, in swiftness, and in grace,  
A mortal courser, match'd the' immortal race.

Achilles speeds from tent to tent, and warms  
His hardy Myrmidons to blood and arms.  
All breathing death, around the chief they stand,  
A grim, terrific, formidable band:  
Grim as voracious wolves, that seek the springs  
When scalding thirst their burning bowels wrings;  
When some tall stag, fresh-slaughter'd in the  
wood, [blood,  
Has drench'd their wide insatiate throats with  
To the black fount they rush, a hideous throng,  
With paunch distended, and with lolling tongue,  
Fire fills their eye, their black jaws belch the gore,  
And, gorged with slaughter, still they thirst for  
more.

Like furious, rush'd the Myrmidonian crew,  
Such their dread strength, and such their deadly  
view.

High in the midst the great Achilles stands,  
Directs their order, and the war commands.  
He, loved of Jove, had launch'd for Ilion's shores  
Full fifty vessels, mann'd with fifty oars:  
Five chosen leaders the fierce bands obey,  
Himself supreme in valour, as in sway.

First march'd Menestheus, of celestial birth,  
Derived from thee, whose waters wash the earth,

Divine Sperchius ! Jove-descended flood !  
A mortal mother mixing with a god.  
Such was Menestheus, but miscall'd by fame  
The son of Borus, that espoused the dame.

Eurodus next; whom Polymele the gay,  
Famed in the graceful dance, produced to day.  
Her, sly Cellenius loved; on her would gaze,  
As with swift step she form'd the running maze:  
To her high chamber from Diana's quire,  
The god pursued her, urged, and crown'd his fire.  
The son confess'd his father's heavenly race,  
And heir'd his mother's swiftness in the chase.  
Strong Ehecleüs, bless'd in all those charms  
That pleased a god, succeeded to her arms;  
Not conscious of those loves, long hid from fame,  
With gifts of price he sought and won the dame;  
Her secret offspring to her sire she bare;  
Her sire caress'd him with a parent's care.

Pisander follow'd; matchless in his art  
To wing the spear, or aim the distant dart;  
No hand so sure of all the' Emathian line,  
Or if a surer, great Patroclus ! thine.

The fourth by Phoenix' grave command was  
Laërces' valiant offspring led the last. [graced;

Soon as Achilles with superior care  
Had call'd the chiefs, and order'd all the war,  
The stern remembrance to his troops be gave—  
‘ Ye far-famed Myrmidons, ye fierce and brave !  
Think with what threats you dared the Trojan  
throng,

Think what reproach these ears endured so long;  
“ Stern son of Peleus, (thus ye used to say,  
While restless, raging, in your ships you lay)  
O nursed with gall, unknowing how to yield;  
Whose rage defrauds us of so famed a field;

If that dire fury must for ever burn,  
What make we here? Return, ye chiefs, return!"  
Such were your words—Now, warriors! grieve  
no more,

Lo there the Trojans; bathe your swords in gore!  
This day shall give you all your soul demands,  
Glut all your hearts, and weary all your hands!'

Thus while he roused the fire in every breast,  
Close and more close, the listening cohorts press'd;  
Ranks wedged in ranks; of arms a steely ring  
Still grows, and spreads, and thickens round the  
king.

As when a circling wall the builder forms,  
Of strength defensive against winds and storms,  
Compacted stones the thickening work compose,  
And round him wide the rising structure grows;  
So helm to helm, and crest to crest they throng,  
Shield urged on shield, and man drove man along;  
Thick, undistinguish'd plumes, together join'd,  
Float in one sea, and wave before the wind.

Far o'er the rest, in glittering pomp appear  
There bold Automedon, Patroclus here;  
Brothers in arms, with equal fury fired;  
Two friends, two bodies with one soul inspired.

But mindful of the gods, Achilles went  
To the rich coffer in his shady tent:  
There lay on heaps his various garments roll'd,  
And costly furs, and carpets stiff with gold  
(The presents of the silver-footed dame):  
From thence he took a bowl, of antique frame,  
Which never man had stain'd with ruddy wine,  
Nor raised in offerings to the powers divine,  
But Peleus' son; and Peleus' son to none  
Had raised in offerings, but to Jove alone.

This tinged with sulphur, sacred first to flame,  
He purged ; and wash'd it in the running stream.  
Then cleansed his hands ; and fixing for a space  
His eyes on heaven, his feet upon the place  
Of sacrifice, the purple draught he pour'd  
Forth in the midst ; and thus the god implored—

‘ O thou supreme ! high-throned all height above !  
O great Pelasgic, Dodonæan Jove !  
Who midst surrounding frosts, and vapours chill,  
Presidest on bleak Dodona's vocal hill :  
(Whose groves the Selli, race austere ! surround,  
Their feet unwash'd, their slumbers on the ground ;  
Who hear, from rustling oaks, thy dark decrees ;  
And catch the fates, low-whisper'd in the breeze ;)  
Hear, as of old ! Thou gavest, at Thetis' prayer,  
Glory to me, and to the Greeks despair.

Lo, to the dangers of the fighting field  
The best, the dearest, of my friends I yield ;  
Though still determined, to my ships confined ;  
Patroclus gone, I stay but half behind.  
O ! be his guard thy providential care,  
Confirm his heart, and string his arm to war :  
Press'd by his single force let Hector see  
His fame in arms not owing all to me.

But when the fleets are saved from foes and fire,  
Let him with conquest and renown retire ;  
Preserve his arms, preserve his social train,  
And safe return him to these eyes again !’

Great Jove consents to half the chief's request,  
But Heaven's eternal doom denies the rest ;  
To free the fleet was granted to his prayer ;  
His safe return, the winds dispersed in air.  
Back to his tent the stern Achilles flies,  
And waits the combat with impatient eyes.

Meanwhile the troops beneath Patroclus' care  
Invade the Trojans, and commence the war.  
As wasps, provoked by children in their play,  
Pour from their mansions by the broad highway,  
In swarms the guiltless traveller engage,  
Whet all their stings, and call forth all their rage;  
All rise in arms, and, with a general cry,  
Assert their waxen domes, and buzzing progeny;  
Thus from the tents the fervent legion swarms,  
So loud their clamours, and so keen their arms:  
Their rising rage Patroclus' breath inspires,  
Who thus inflames them with heroic fires.

‘ O warriors, partners of Achilles’ praise!  
Be mindful of your deeds in ancient days;  
Your godlike master let your acts proclaim,  
And add new glories to his mighty name.  
Think your Achilles sees you fight: be brave,  
And humble the proud monarch whom you save.’

Joyful they heard, and kindling as he spoke,  
Flew to the fleet, involved in fire and smoke.  
From shore to shor, the doubling shouts resound,  
The hollow ships return a deeper sound.  
The war stood still, and all around them gazed,  
When great Achilles’ shining armour blazed:  
Troy saw, and thought the dread Achilles nigh,  
At once they see, they tremble, and they fly.

Then first thy spear, divine Patroclus! flew,  
Where the war raged, and where the tumult grew.  
Close to the stern of that famed ship which bore  
Unbless’d Protesilaus to Ilion’s shore,  
The great Pœonian, bold Pyræchmes, stood  
(Who led his bands from Axius’ winding flood);  
His shoulder blade receives the fatal wound;  
The groaning warrior pants upon the ground.

His troops, that see their country's glory slain,  
Fly diverse, scatter'd o'er the distant plain.  
Patroclus' arm forbids the spreading fires,  
And from the half-burn'd ship proud Troy retires :  
Clear'd from the smoke the joyful navy lies ;  
In heaps on heaps the foe tumultuous flies ;  
Triumphant Greece her rescued decks ascends,  
And loud acclaim the starry region rends.  
So when thick clouds inwrap the mountain's head,  
O'er heaven's expanse like one black ceiling  
        spread ;

Sudden the thunderer, with a flashing ray,  
Bursts through the darkness, and lets down the day :  
The hills shine out, the rocks in prospect rise,  
And streams, and vales, and forests, strike the eyes ;  
The smiling scene wide opens to the sight,  
And all the unmeasured ether flames with light.

But Troy repulsed, and scatter'd o'er the plains,  
Forced from the navy, yet the fight maintains.  
Now every Greek some hostile hero slew,  
But still the foremost bold Patroclus flew :  
As Areilycus had turn'd him round,  
Sharp in his thigh he felt the piercing wound ;  
The brazen-pointed spear, with vigour thrown,  
The thigh transfix'd, and broke the brittle bone :  
Headlong he fell. Next, Thoäs, was thy chance ;  
Thy breast, unarm'd, received the Spartan lance.  
Phylides' dart (as Amphiclus drew nigh)  
His blow prevented, and transpierced his thigh,  
Tore all the brawn, and rent the nerves away ;  
In darkness, and in death, the warrior lay.

In equal arms two sons of Nestor stand,  
And two bold brothers of the Lycian band :  
By great Antilochus, Atymnus dies,  
Pierced in the flank, lamented youth ! he lies.

Kind Maris, bleeding in his brother's wound,  
Defends the breathless carcass on the ground ;  
Furious he flies, his murderer to engage :  
But godlike Thrasymed prevents his rage,  
Between his arm and shoulder aims a blow ;  
His arm falls spouting in the dust below :  
He sinks, with endless darkness cover'd o'er ;  
And vents his soul, effused with gushing gore.

Slain by two brothers, thus two brothers bleed,  
Sarpedon's friends, Amisodarus' seed ;  
Amisodarus, who, by furies led,  
The bane of men, abhor'd Chimaera bred ;  
Skill'd in the dart in vain, his sons expire,  
And pay the forfeit of their guilty sire.

Stopp'd in the tumult Cleobulus lies,  
Beneath Oileus' arm, a living prize ;  
A living prize not long the Trojan stood ;  
The thirsty falchion drank his reeking blood :  
Plunged in his throat the smoking weapon lies ;  
Black death, and fate unpitying, seal his eyes.

Amid the ranks, with mutual thirst of fame,  
Lycon the brave, and fierce Peneleus came ;  
In vain their javelins at each other flew,  
Now, met in arms, their eager swords they drew.  
On the plumed crest of his Bœotian foe  
The daring Lycon aim'd a noble blow ;  
The sword broke short ; but his, Peneleus sped  
Full on the juncture of the neck and head :  
The head, divided by a stroke so just,  
Hung by the skin : the body sunk to dust.

O'ertaken Neämas by Merion bleeds, [steeds ;  
Pierced through the shoulder as he mounts his  
Back from the car he tumbles to the ground :  
His swimming eyes eternal shades surround.

Next Erymas was doom'd his fate to feel,  
His open'd mouth received the Cretan steel :  
Beneath the brain the point a passage tore,  
Crash'd the thin bones, and drown'd the teeth in  
gore.

His mouth, his eyes, his nostrils, pour a flood ;  
He sobs his soul out in the gush of blood.

As when the flocks neglected by the swain  
(Or kids, or lambs) lie scatter'd o'er the plain,  
A troop of wolves the unguarded charge survey,  
And rend the trembling, unresisting prey ;  
Thus on the foe the Greeks impetuous came :  
Troy fled, unmindful of her former fame.

But still at Hector godlike Ajax aim'd,  
Still, pointed at his breast, his javelin flamed.  
The Trojan chief, experienced in the field,  
O'er his broad shoulders spread the massy shield,  
Observed the storm of darts the Grecians pour,  
And on his buckler caught the ringing shower :  
He sees for Greece the scale of conquest rise,  
Yet stops, and turns, and saves his loved allies.

As when the hand of Jove a tempest forms,  
And rolls the cloud to blacken heaven with storms,  
Dark o'er the fields the ascending vapour flies,  
And shades the Sun, and blots the golden skies ;  
So from the ships, along the dusky plain,  
Dire Flight and Terror drove the Trojan train.  
E'en Hector fled ; through heaps of disarray  
The fiery coursers forced their lord away :  
While far behind his Trojans fall confused ;  
Wedged in the trench, in one vast carnage bruised ;  
Chariots on chariots roll : the clashing spokes  
Shock ; while the madding steeds break short  
their yokes ;

In vain they labour up the steepy mound;  
Their charioteers lie foaming on the ground.  
Fierce on the rear, with shouts, Patroclus flies;  
Tumultuous clamour fills the fields and skies;  
Thick drifts of dust involve their rapid flight;  
Clouds rise on clouds, and heaven is snatch'd  
from sight.

The affrighted steeds, their dying lords cast down,  
Scour o'er the fields, and stretch to reach the town.  
Loud o'er the rout was heard the victor's cry,  
Where the war bleeds, and where the thickest die,  
Where horse, and arms, and chariots, lie o'er-  
thrown,

And bleeding heroes under axles groan.  
No stop, no check, the steeds of Peleus knew:  
From bank to bank the immortal coursers flew,  
High-bounding o'er the foss: the whirling car  
Smokes through the ranks, o'er takes the flying war,  
And thunders after Hector: Hector flies,  
Patroclus shakes his lance: but Fate denies.  
Not with less noise, with less impetuous force,  
The tide of Trojans urge their desperate course,  
Than when in autumn Jove his fury pours,  
And earth is loaden with incessant showers;  
(When guilty mortals break the eternal laws,  
Or judges, bribed, betray the righteous cause)  
From their deep beds he bids the rivers rise,  
And opens all the floodgates of the skies:  
The impetuous torrents from their hills obey,  
Whole fields are drown'd, and mountains swept  
away;

Loud roars the deluge till it meets the main;  
And trembling man sees all his labours vain!  
And now the chief (the foremost troops repell'd)  
Back to the ships his destined progress held,

Bore down half Troy in his resistless way,  
And forced the routed ranks to stand the day.  
Between the space where silver Simoës flows,  
Where lay the fleets, and where the rampires rose,  
All grim in dust and blood, Patroclus stands,  
And turns the slaughter on the conquering bands.  
First Pronoës died beneath his fiery dart;  
Which pierced below the shield his valiant heart.  
Thestor was next, who saw the chief appear,  
And fell the victim of his coward fear;  
Shrunk up he sat, with wild and haggard eye,  
Nor stood to combat, nor had force to fly:  
Patroclus mark'd him as he shunn'd the war,  
And with unmanly tremblings shook the car,  
And dropp'd the flowing reins. Him 'twixt the jaws  
The javelin sticks, and from the chariot draws.  
As on a rock that overhangs the main,  
An angler, studious of the line and cane,  
Some mighty fish draws panting to the shore;  
Not with less ease the barbed javelin bore  
The gaping dastard; as the spear was shook,  
He fell, and life his heartless breast forsook.

Next on Eryalus he flies; a stone,  
Large as a rock, was by his fury thrown:  
Full on his crown the ponderous fragment flew,  
And burst the helm, and cleft the head in two:  
Prone to the ground the breathless warrior fell,  
And death involved him with the shades of hell.  
Then low in dust Epaltes, Echius, lie;  
Ipheas, Evippus, Polymelus, die;  
Amphoterus and Erymas succeed;  
And last Tlepolemus and Pyres bleed.  
Where'er he moves, the glowing slayments spread  
In heaps on heaps; a monument of dead.

When now Sarpedon his brave friends beheld  
Groveling in dust, and gasping on the field,  
With this reproach his flying host he warms—  
‘ O stain to honour! oh disgrace to arms!  
Forsake, inglorious, the contended plain;  
This hand, unaided, shall the war sustain:  
The task be mine, this hero’s strength to try,  
Who mows whole troops, and makes an army fly.’

He spake; and, speaking, leaps from off the car:  
Patroclus lights, and sternly waits the war.  
As when two vultures on the mountain’s height  
Stoop with resounding pinions to the fight;  
They cuff, they tear, they raise a screaming cry;  
The desert echoes, and the rocks reply:  
The warriors thus, opposed in arms, engage  
With equal clamours, and with equal rage.

Jove view’d the combat; whose event foreseen,  
He thus bespoke his sister and his queen—  
‘ The hour draws on; the destinies ordain,  
My godlike son shall press the Phrygian plain:  
Already on the verge of death he stands,  
His life is owed to fierce Patroclus’ hands.  
What passions in a parent’s breast debate!  
Say, shall I snatch him from impending fate,  
And send him safe to Lycia, distant far  
From all the dangers and the toils of war;  
Or to his doom my bravest offspring yield,  
And fatten, with celestial blood, the field?’

Then thus the goddess with the radiant eyes—  
‘ What words are these? O sovereign of the skies!  
Short is the date prescribed to mortal man;  
Shall Jove, for one, extend the narrow span,  
Whose bounds were fix’d before his race began?  
How many sons of gods, foredoom’d to death  
Before proud Ilion, must resign their breath!

Were thine exempt, debate would rise above,  
And murmuring powers condemn their partial  
Give the bold chief a glorious fate in fight; [Jove.  
And when the' ascending soul has wing'd her flight,  
Let Sleep and Death convey, by thy command,  
The breathless body to his native land.

His friends and people, to his future praise,  
A marble tomb and pyramid shall raise,  
And lasting honours to his ashes give:  
His fame ('tis all the dead can have) shall live.'

She said: the cloud-compeller, overcome,  
Assents to Fate, and ratifies the doom. [till'd  
Then, touch'd with grief, the weeping heavens dis-  
A shower of blood o'er all the fatal field:  
The god, his eyes averting from the plain,  
Laments his son, predestined to be slain,  
Far from the Lycian shores, his happy native reign.

Now met in arms, the combatants appear,  
Each heaved the shield, and poised the lifted spear:  
From strong Patroclus' hand the javelin fled,  
And pass'd the groin of valiant Thrasymed;  
The nerves unbraced no more his bulk sustain,  
He falls, and falling bites the bloody plain.  
Two sounding darts the Lycian leader threw;  
The first aloof with erring fury flew,  
The next transpierced Achilles' mortal steed,  
The generous Pedasus of Theban breed,  
Fix'd in the shoulder's joint; he reel'd around,  
Roll'd in the bloody dust, and paw'd the slippery  
ground.

His sudden fall the' entangled harness broke;  
Each axle crackled, and the chariot shook:  
When bold Automedon, to disengage  
The starting coursers, and restrain their rage,

Divides the traces with his sword, and freed  
The encumber'd chariot from the dying steed:  
The rest move on, obedient to the rein;  
The car rolls slowly o'er the dusty plain.

The towering chiefs to fiercer fight advance;  
And first Sarpedon whirl'd his weighty lance,  
Which o'er the warrior's shoulder took its course,  
And spent in empty air its dying force.  
Not so Patroclus' never-erring dart;  
Aim'd at his breast, it pierced the mortal part,  
Where the strong fibres bind the solid heart.  
Then, as the mountain-oak, or poplar tall,  
Or pine (fit mast for some great admiral)  
Nods to the axe, till with a groaning sound  
It sinks, and spreads its honours on the ground;  
Thus fell the king; and, laid on earth supine,  
Before his chariot stretch'd his form divine:  
He grasp'd the dust distain'd with streaming gore,  
And, pale in death, lay groaning on the shore.  
So lies a bull beneath the lion's paws,  
While the grim savage grinds with foamy jaws  
The trembling limbs, and sucks the smoking blood;  
Deep groans, and hollow roars, rebellow through  
the wood.

Then to the leader of the Lycian band  
The dying chief address'd his last command;  
'Glaucus, be bold; thy task be first to dare  
The glorious dangers of destructive war,  
To lead my troops, to combat at their head,  
Incite the living, and supply the dead.  
Tell them, I charged them with my latest breath  
Not unrevenged to bear Sarpedon's death.  
What grief, what shame, must Glaucus undergo,  
If these spoil'd arms adorn a Grecian foe!

Then as a friend, and as a warrior, fight;  
Defend my body, conquer in my right;  
That, taught by great examples, all may try  
Like thee to vanquish, or like me to die.' [breath,

He ceased; the Fates suppress'd his labouring  
And his eyes darken'd with the shades of death.  
The insulting victor with disdain bestrode  
The prostrate prince, and on his bosom trod;  
Then drew the weapon from his panting heart,  
The reeking fibres clinging to the dart;  
From the wide wound gush'd out a stream of blood,  
And the soul issued in the purple flood.  
His flying steeds the Myrmidons detain,  
Unguided now, their mighty master slain.  
All-impotent of aid, transfix'd with grief,  
Unhappy Glaucus heard the dying chief:  
His painful arm, yet useless with the smart  
Inflicted late by Teucer's deadly dart,  
Supported on his better hand he stay'd;  
To Phœbus then ('twas all he could) he pray'd:

'All-seeing monarch! whether Lycia's coast,  
Or sacred Ilion, thy bright presence boast,  
Powerful alike to ease the wretch's smart;  
O hear me! god of every healing art!  
Lo! stiff with clotted blood, and pierced with pain,  
That thrills my arm, and shoots through every vein,  
I stand unable to sustain the spear,  
And sigh, at distance from the glorious war.  
Low in the dust is great Sarpedon laid,  
Nor Jove vouchsafed his hapless offspring aid,  
But thou, O god of health! thy succour lend,  
To guard the reliques of my slaughter'd friend:  
For thou, though distant, canst restore my might,  
To head my Lycians, and support the fight.'

Apollo heard; and, suppliant as he stood,  
His heavenly hand restrain'd the flux of blood:  
He drew the dolours from the wounded part,  
And breathed a spirit in his rising heart.  
Renew'd by art divine, the hero stands,  
And owns the assistance of immortal hands.  
First to the fight his native troops he warms,  
Then loudly calls on Troy's vindictive arms;  
With ample strides he stalks from place to place;  
Now fires Agenor, now Polydamas;  
Æneas next, and Hector he accosts;  
Inflaming thus the rage of all their hosts.

‘ What thoughts, regardless chief! thy breast emblem  
Oh too forgetful of the friends of Troy! [ploy?  
Those generous friends, who, from their country far,  
Breathe their brave souls out in another's war.  
See! where in dust the great Sarpedon lies,  
In action valiant, and in council wise,  
Who guarded right, and kept his people free;  
To all his Lycians lost, and lost to thee!  
Stretch'd by Patroclus' arm on yonder plains,  
O save from hostile rage his loved remains!  
Ah let not Greece his conquer'd trophies boast,  
Nor on his corse revenge her heroes lost!’

He spoke; each leader in his grief partook;  
Troy, at the loss, through all her legions shook.  
Transfix'd with deep regret, they view o'erthrown  
At once his country's pillar, and their own;  
A chief, who led to Troy's beleaguer'd wall  
A host of heroes, and outshined them all.  
Fired, they rush on; first Hector seeks the foes,  
And with superior vengeance greatly glows.

But o'er the dead the fierce Patroclus stands,  
And, rousing Ajax, roused the listening bands.

‘ Heroes, be men! be what you were before;  
 Or weigh the great occasion, and be more.  
 The chief who taught our lofty walls to yield  
 Lies pale in death, extended on the field.  
 To guard his body Troy in numbers flies;  
 ’Tis half the glory to maintain our prize.  
 Haste, strip his arms, the slaughter round him  
 And send the living Lycians to the dead.’ [spread,

The heroes kindle at his fierce command:  
 The martial squadrons close on either hand:  
 Here Troy and Lycia charge with loud alarms,  
 Thessalia there, and Greece, oppose their arms.  
 With horrid shouts they circle round the slain;  
 The clash of armour rings o’er all the plain.  
 Great Jove, to swell the horrors of the fight,  
 O’er the fierce armies pours pernicious night,  
 And round his son confounds the warring hosts,  
 His fate ennobling with a crowd of ghosts.’

Now Greece gives way, and great Epigeus falls;  
 Agaeleus’ son, from Budium’s lofty walls;  
 Who chased for murder thence, a suppliant came  
 To Peleus, and the silver-footed dame;  
 Now sent to Troy, Achilles’ arms to aid,  
 He pays due vengeance to his kinsman’s shade.  
 Soon as his luckless hand had touch’d the dead,  
 A rock’s large fragment thunder’d on his head;  
 Hurl’d by Hectorean force, it cleft in twain  
 His shatter’d helm, and stretch’d him o’er the slain.

Fierce to the van of fight Patroclus came;  
 And, like an eagle darting at his game,  
 Sprung on the Trojan and the Lycian band.  
 What grief thy heart, what fury urged thy hand,  
 O generous Greek! when with full vigour thrown,  
 At Sthenelaüs flew the weighty stone,

Which sunk him to the dead : when Troy, too near  
That arm, drew back ; and Hector learn'd to fear.  
Far as an able hand a lance can throw,  
Or at the lists, or at the fighting foe ;  
So far the Trojans from their lines retired ;  
Till Glaucus, turning, all the rest inspired.  
Then Bathyclæus fell beneath his rage,  
The only hope of Chaleon's trembling age :  
Wide o'er the land was stretch'd his large domain,  
With stately seats, and riches, bless'd in vain :  
Him, bold with youth, and eager to pursue  
The flying Lycians, Glaucus met, and slew ;  
Pierced through the bosom with a sudden wound,  
He fell, and, falling, made the fields resound.  
The' Achaians sorrow for their hero slain ; [plain,  
With conquering shouts the Trojans shake the  
And crowd to spoil the dead ; the Greeks oppose ;  
An iron circle round the carcass grows.

Then brave Laogonus resign'd his breath,  
Dispatch'd by Merion to the shades of death :  
On Ida's holy hill he made abode,  
The priest of Jove, and honour'd like his god.  
Between the jaw and ear the javelin went ;  
The soul, exhaling, issued at the vent.  
His spear Æneas at the victor threw,  
Who, stooping forward, from the death withdrew ;  
The lance hiss'd harmless o'er his covering shield,  
And trembling struck, and rooted in the field ;  
There yet scarce spent, it quivers on the plain,  
Sent by the great Æneas' arm in vain.  
' Swift as thou art (the raging hero cries)  
And skill'd in dancing to dispute the prize,  
My spear, the destined passage had it found,  
Had fix'd thy active vigour to the ground.'

‘ O valiant leader of the Dardan host!  
(Insulted Merion thus retorts the boast)  
Strong as you are, ’tis mortal force you trust,  
An arm as strong may stretch thee in the dust.  
And if to this my lance thy fate be given,  
Vain are thy vaunts; success is still from Heaven:  
This, instant, sends thee down to Pluto’s coast;  
Mine is the glory, his thy parting ghost.’

‘ O friend (Menœtius’ son this answer gave)  
With words to combat, ill befits the brave;  
Not empty boasts the sons of Troy repel, [hell.  
Your swords must plunge them to the shades of  
To speak, beseems the council; but to dare  
In glorious action, is the task of war.’

This said, Patroclus to the battle flies;  
Great Merion follows, and new shouts arise:  
Shields, helmets rattle, as the warriors close;  
And thick and heavy sounds the storm of blows.  
As through the shrilling vale, or mountain ground,  
The labours of the woodman’s axe resound;  
Blows following blows are heard re-echoing wide,  
While crackling forests fall on every side:  
Thus echoed all the fields with loud alarms,  
So fell the warriors, and so rung their arms.

Now great Sarpedon on the sandy shore,  
His heavenly form defaced with dust and gore,  
And stuck with darts by warring heroes shed,  
Lies undistinguish’d from the vulgar dead.  
His long-disputed corse the chiefs enclose,  
On every side the busy combat grows;  
Thick as beneath some shepherd’s thatch’d abode  
(The pails high foaming with a milky flood)  
The buzzing flies, a persevering train,  
Incessant swarm, and chased return again.

Jove view'd the combat with a stern survey,  
And eyes that flash'd intolerable day.  
Fix'd on the field his sight, his breast debates  
The vengeance due, and meditates the fates :  
Whether to urge their prompt effect, and call  
The force of Hector to Patroclus' fall,  
This instant see his short-lived trophies won,  
And stretch him breathless on his slaughter'd son ;  
Or yet, with many a soul's untimely flight,  
Augment the fame and horror of the fight.  
To crown Achilles' valiant friend with praise  
At length he dooms ; and, that his last of days  
Shall set in glory, bids him drive the foe ;  
Nor unattended see the shades below.  
Then Hector's mind he fills with dire dismay ;  
He mounts his car, and calls his hosts away.  
Sunk with Troy's heavy fates, he sees decline  
The scales of Jove, and pants with awe divine.

Then, nor before, the hardy Lycians fled,  
And left their monarch with the common dead :  
Around, in heaps on heaps, a dreadful wall  
Of carnage rises, as the heroes fall.  
(So Jove decreed !) At length the Greeks obtain  
The prize contested, and despoil the slain.  
The radiant arms are by Patroclus borne ;  
Patroclus' ships the glorious spoils adorn.

Then thus to Phœbus, in the realms above,  
Spoke from his throne the cloud-compelling Jove.  
' Descend, my Phœbus ! on the Phrygian plain,  
And from the fight convey Sarpedon slain ;  
Then bathe his body in the crystal flood,  
With dust dishonour'd, and deform'd with blood ;  
O'er all his limbs ambrosial odours shed,  
And with celestial robes adorn the dead.

Those rites discharged, his sacred corse bequeath  
To the soft arms of silent Sleep and Death.  
They to his friends the mournful charge shall bear;  
His friends a tomb and pyramid shall rear:  
What honours mortals after death receive,  
Those unavailing honours we may give!"

Apollo bows, and from mount Ida's height,  
Swift to the field precipitates his flight;  
Thence from the war the breathless hero bore,  
Veil'd in a cloud, to silver Simoës' shore;  
There bathed his honourable wounds, and dress'd  
His manly members in the' immortal vest;  
And with perfumes of sweet ambrosial dews  
Restores his freshness, and his form renews.  
Then Sleep and Death, two twins of winged race,  
Of matchless swiftness, but of silent pace,  
Received Sarpedon, at the god's command,  
And in a moment reach'd the Lycian land;  
The corse amidst his weeping friends they laid,  
Where endless honours wait the sacred shade.

Meanwhile Patroclus pours along the plains,  
With foaming coursers, and with loosen'd reins.  
Fierce on the Trojan and the Lycian crew,  
Ah blind to Fate! thy headlong fury flew:  
Against what Fate and powerful Jove ordain,  
Vain was thy friend's command, thy courage vain:  
For he, the god, whose counsels uncontroll'd  
Dismay the mighty, and confound the bold;  
The god who gives, resumes, and orders all,  
He urged thee on, and urged thee on to fall.

Who first, brave hero! by that arm was slain,  
Who last beneath thy vengeance press'd the plain;  
When Heaven itself thy fatal fury led,  
And call'd to fill the number of the dead?



HOMER

Then Sleep & Death, two twins of winged race,  
Of matchless swiftness, but of silent pace,  
Receiv'd Sarpedon, at the God's command.

Iliad. Book 20.

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Adrestus first; Autonoüs then succeeds;  
Echeclus follows; next young Megas bleeds;  
Epistor, Melanippus, bite the ground;  
The slaughter, Elasus and Mulius crown'd:  
Then sunk Pylartes to eternal night;  
The rest, dispersing, trust their fates to flight.

Now Troy had stoop'd beneath his matchless  
power,

But flaming Phœbus kept the sacred tower.  
Thrice at the battlements Patroclus strook;  
His blazing ægis thrice Apollo shook: [cloud,  
He tried the fourth; when, bursting from the  
A more than mortal voice was heard aloud:

‘ Patroclus! cease; this heaven-defended wall  
Defies thy lance; not fated yet to fall;  
Thy friend, thy greater far, it shall withstand,  
Troy shall not stoop e'en to Achilles' hand.’

So spoke the god who darts celestial fires;  
The Greek obeys him, and with awe retires:  
While Hector, checking at the Seæan gates  
His panting coursers, in his breast debates,  
Or in the field his forces to employ,  
Or draw the troops within the walls of Troy.  
Thus while he thought, beside him Phœbus stood,  
In Asius' shape, who reign'd by Sangar's flood;  
(Thy brother, Hecuba! from Dymas sprung,  
A valiant warrior, haughty, bold, and young)  
Thus he accosts him—‘ What a shameful sight!  
Gods! is it Hector that forbears the fight?  
Were thine my vigour, this successful spear  
Should soon convince thee of so false a fear.  
Turn thee, ah turn thee to the field of fame,  
And in Patroclus' blood efface thy shame.  
Perhaps Apollo shall thy arms succeed,  
And Heaven ordains him by thy lance to bleed.’

So spoke the inspiring god; then took his flight,  
And plunged amidst the tumult of the fight.  
He bids Cebrion drive the rapid car;  
The lash resounds, the coursers rush to war,  
The god the Grecians' sinking souls depress'd,  
And pour'd swift spirits through each Trojan  
breast.

Patroclus lights, impatient for the fight,  
A spear his left, a stone employs his right:  
With all his nerves he drives it at the foe;  
Pointed above, and rough and gross below:  
The falling ruin crush'd Cebrion's head,  
The lawless offspring of king Priam's bed;  
His front, brows, eyes, one undistinguish'd wound:  
The bursting balls drop sightless to the ground.  
The charioteer, while yet he held the rein,  
Struck from the car, falls headlong on the plain.  
To the dark shades the soul unwilling glides,  
While the proud victor thus his fall derides—

‘ Good heavens! what active feats yon artist  
shows!

What skilful divers are our Phrygian foes!  
Mark with what ease they sink into the sand!  
Pity! that all their practice is by land.’

Then rushing sudden on his prostrate prize,  
To spoil the carcass fierce Patroclus flies:  
Swift as a lion, terrible, and bold,  
That sweeps the fields, depopulates the fold;  
Pierced through the dauntless heart, then tum-  
bles slain,

And from his fatal courage finds his bane.  
At once bold Hector, leaping from his car,  
Defends the body, and provokes the war.  
Thus for some slaughter'd hind, with equal rage,  
Two lordly rulers of the wood engage;

Stung with fierce hunger, each the prey invades,  
And echoing roars rebellow through the shades.  
Stern Hector fastens on the warrior's head,  
And by the foot Patroclus drags the dead :  
While all around, confusion, rage, and fright,  
Mix the contending hosts in mortal fight.  
So, pent by hills, the wild winds roar aloud  
In the deep bosom of some gloomy wood ;  
Leaves, arms, and trees, aloft in air are blown,  
The broad oaks crackle, and the silvans groan ;  
This way and that, the rattling thicket bends,  
And the whole forest in one crash descends.  
Not with less noise, with less tumultuous rage,  
In dreadful shock the mingled hosts engage.  
Darts shower'd on darts, now round the carcass  
ring ;

Now flights of arrows bounding from the string :  
Stones follow stones ; some clatter on the fields,  
Some, hard and heavy, shake the sounding shields.  
But where the rising whirlwind clouds the plains,  
Sunk in soft dust the mighty chief remains,  
And, stretch'd in death, forgets the guiding reins !

Now flaming from the zenith, Sol had driven  
His fervid orb through half the vault of heaven ;  
While on each host with equal tempest fell  
The showering darts, and numbers sunk to hell.  
But when his evening wheels o'erhung the main,  
Glad conquest rested on the Grecian train.  
Then from amidst the tumult and alarms,  
They draw the conquer'd corse, and radiant arms.  
Then rash Patroclus with new fury glows,  
And breathing slaughter, pours amid the foes.  
Thrice on the press, like Mars himself, he flew,  
And thrice three heroes at each onset slew.

There ends thy glory ! there the Fates untwine  
The last, black remnant of so bright a line :  
Apollo dreadful stops thy middle way ;  
Death calls, and Heaven allows no longer day !

For, lo ! the god in dusky clouds enshrined,  
Approaching dealt a staggering blow behind.  
The weighty shock his neck and shoulders feel ;  
His eyes flash sparkles, his stunn'd senses reel  
In giddy darkness : far to distance flung,  
His bounding helmet on the champaign rung.  
Achilles' plume is stain'd with dust and gore ;  
That plume which never stoop'd to earth before ;  
Long used, untonch'd, in fighting fields to shine,  
And shade the temples of the man divine.  
Jove dooms it now on Hector's helm to nod ;  
Not long—for Fate pursues him and the god.

His spear in shivers falls : his ample shield  
Drops from his arm : his baldric strows the field :  
The corselet his astonish'd breast forsakes :  
Loose is each joint ; each nerve with horror shakes.  
Stupid he stares, and all-assistless stands :  
Such is the force of more than mortal hands !

A Dardan youth there was, well known to fame,  
From Panthus sprung, Euphorbus was his name ;  
Famed for the manage of the foaming horse,  
Skill'd in the dart, and matchless in the course :  
Full twenty knights he tumbled from the car,  
While yet he learn'd his rudiments of war.  
His venturous spear first drew the hero's gore ;  
He struck, he wounded, but he durst no more ;  
Nor, though disarm'd, Patroclus' fury stood :  
But swift withdrew the long pretended wood,  
And turn'd him short, and herded in the crowd.  
Thus, by an arm divine, and mortal spear,  
Wounded at once, Patroclus yields to fear,

Retires for succour to his social train, [vain.  
And flies the fate, which Heaven decreed, in  
Stern Hector, as the bleeding chief he views,  
Breaks through the ranks, and his retreat pursues:  
The lance arrests him with a mortal wound;  
He falls, earth thunders, and his arms resound.  
With him all Greece was sunk; that moment all  
Her yet-surviving heroes seem'd to fall.

So scorch'd with heat, along the desert shore,  
The roaming lion meets the bristly boar,  
Fast by the spring; they both dispute the flood,  
With flaming eyes, and jaws besmear'd with blood;  
At length the sovereign savage wins the strife,  
And the torn boar resigns his thirst and life;  
Patroclus thus, so many chiefs o'erthrown,  
So many lives effused, expires his own.  
As dying now at Hector's feet he lies,  
He sternly views him, and triumphing cries—

‘ Lie there, Patroclus! and with thee the joy,  
Thy pride once promised, of subverting Troy;  
The fancied scenes of Ilion wrapp'd in flames,  
And thy soft pleasures served with captive dames!  
Unthinking man! I fought those towers to free,  
And guard that beauteous race from lords like thee:  
But thou a prey to vultures shalt be made;  
Thy own Achilles cannot lend thee aid;  
Though much at parting that great chief might say,  
And much enjoin thee this important day.

“ Return not, my brave friend (perhaps he said)  
Without the bloody arms of Hector dead.”  
He spoke, Patroclus march'd, and thus he sped.

Supine, and wildly gazing on the skies,  
With faint, expiring breath, the chief replies—  
‘ Vain boaster! cease, and know the powers di-  
Jove's and Apollo's is this deed, not thine; [vine!

To Heaven is owed whate'er your own you call,  
And Heaven itself disarm'd me ere my fall.  
Had twenty mortals, each thy match in might,  
Opposed me fairly, they had sunk in fight:  
By Fate and Phœbus was I first o'erthrown,  
Euphorbus next; the third mean part thy own.  
But thou, imperious! hear my latest breath;  
The gods inspire it, and it sounds thy death:  
Insulting man, thou shalt be soon, as I; [nigh;  
Black fate hangs o'er thee, and thy hour draws  
E'en now on life's last verge I see thee stand,  
I see thee fall, and by Achilles' hand.'

He faints; the soul unwilling wings her way,  
(The beauteous body left a load of clay)  
Flits to the lone, uncomfortable coast;  
A naked, wandering, melancholy ghost!

Then Hector pausing, as his eyes he fed  
On the pale carcass, thus address'd the dead—  
‘ From whence this boding speech, the stern  
decree  
Of death denounced, or why denounced to me?  
Why not as well Achilles' fate be given  
To Hector's lance? Who knows the will of Hea-  
ven?’

Pensive he said; then pressing as he lay  
His breathless bosom, tore the lance away;  
And upwards cast the corpse: the reeking spear  
He shakes, and charges the bold charioteer.  
But swift Automedon with loosen'd reins  
Wrapp'd in the chariot o'er the distant plains,  
Far from his rage the' immortal coursers drove;  
The' immortal coursers were the gift of Jove.

## BOOK XVII.

## The Argument.

## THE SEVENTH BATTLE, FOR THE BODY OF PATROCLUS : THE ACTS OF MENELAUS.

Menelaüs, upon the death of Patroclus, defends his body from the enemy : Euphorbus, who attempts it, is slain. Hector advancing, Menelaüs retires ; but soon returns with Ajax, and drives him off. This Glaucus objects to Hector as a flight, who thereupon puts on the armour he had won from Patroclus, and renewes the battle. The Greeks give way, till Ajax rallies them : Æneas sustains the Trojans. Æneas and Hector attempt the chariot of Achilles, which is borne off by Automedon. The horses of Achilles deplore the loss of Patroclus : Jupiter covers his body with a thick darkness : the noble prayer of Ajax on that occasion. Menelaüs sends Antilochus to Achilles, with the news of Patroclus's death : then returns to the fight, where, though attacked with the utmost fury, he and Meriones, assisted by the Ajaces, bear off the body to the ships.

The time is the evening of the eight-and-twentieth day. The scene lies in the fields before Troy.

ON the cold earth divine Patroclus spread,  
Lies pierced with wounds among the vulgar dead.  
Great Menelaüs, touch'd with generous woe,  
Springs to the front, and guards him from the foe.  
Thus round her new-fall'n young the heifer moves,  
Fruit of her throes, and first-born of her loves ;  
And anxious, (helpless as he lies, and bare)  
Turns, and re-turns her, with a mother's care.  
Opposed to each that near the carcass came,  
His broad shield glimmers, and his lances flame.

The son of Panthus, skill'd the dart to send,  
Eyes the dead hero, and insults the friend.

‘ This hand, Atrides, laid Patroclus low;  
Warrior! desist, nor tempt an equal blow:  
To me the spoils my prowess won, resign:  
Depart with life, and leave the glory mine.’

The Trojan thus: the Spartan monarch burn'd  
With generous anguish, and in scorn return'd:  
‘ Laugh'st thou not, Jove! from thy superior throne,  
When mortals boast of prowess not their own?  
Not thus the lion glories in his might,  
Nor panther braves his spotted foe in fight,  
Nor thus the boar (those terrors of the plain);  
Man only vaunts his force, and vaunts in vain.  
But far the vainest of the boastful kind  
These sons of Panthus vent their haughty mind.  
Yet 'twas but late, beneath my conquering steel  
This boaster's brother, Hyperenor, fell;  
Against our arm, which rashly he defied,  
Vain was his vigour, and as vain his pride.  
These eyes beheld him on the dust expire,  
No more to cheer his spouse, or glad his sire.  
Presumptuous youth! like his shall be thy doom,  
Go, wait thy brother to the Stygian gloom;  
Or, while thou may'st, avoid the threaten'd fate;  
Fools stay to feel it, and are wise too late.’

Unmoved, Euphorbus thus—‘ That action  
known,  
Come, for my brother's blood repay thy own.  
His weeping father claims thy destined head,  
And spouse, a widow in her bridal bed,  
On these thy conquer'd spoils I shall bestow,  
To sooth a consort's and a parent's woe.  
No longer then defer the glorious strife,  
Let Heaven decide our fortune, fame, and life.’

Swift as the word the missile lance he flings;  
The well-aim'd weapon on the buckler rings,

But, blunted by the brass, innoxious falls.  
On Jove the father great Atrides calls,  
Nor flies the javelin from his arm in vain,  
It pierced his throat, and bent him to the plain;  
Wide through the neck appears the grisly wound,  
Prone sinks the warrior, and his arms resound.  
The shining circlets of his golden hair,  
Which e'en the Graces might be proud to wear,  
Instarr'd with gems and gold, bestrow the shore,  
With dust dishonour'd, and deform'd with gore.

As the young olive, in some silvan scene,  
Crown'd by fresh fountains with eternal green,  
Lifts the gay head, in snowy flowerets fair,  
And plays and dances to the gentle air;  
When lo! a whirlwind from high heaven invades  
The tender plant, and withers all its shades;  
It lies uprooted from its genial bed,  
A lovely ruin now defaced and dead;  
Thus young, thus beautiful, Euphorbus lay,  
While the fierce Spartan tore his arms away.  
Proud of his deed, and glorious in the prize,  
Affrighted Troy the towering victor flies:  
Flies, as before some mountain lion's ire  
The village curs and trembling swains retire,  
When o'er the slaughter'd bull they hear him roar,  
And see his jaws distill with smoking gore:  
All pale with fear, at distance scatter'd round,  
They shout incessant, and the vales resound.

Meanwhile Apollo view'd with envious eyes,  
And urged great Hector to dispute the prize;  
(In Mentes' shape, beneath whose martial care  
The rough Ciconians learn'd the trade of war)  
'Forbear, (he cried), with fruitless speed to chase  
Achilles' coursers, of ethereal race;

They stoop not, these, to mortal man's command,  
Or stoop to none but great Achilles' hand.  
Too long amused with a pursuit so vain,  
Turn, and behold the brave Euphorbus slain;  
By Sparta slain! for ever now suppress'd  
The fire which burn'd in that undaunted breast!

Thus having spoke, Apollo wing'd his flight,  
And mix'd with mortals in the toils of fight:  
His words infix'd unutterable care  
Deep in great Hector's soul: through all the war  
He darts his anxious eye; and, instant, view'd  
The breathless hero in his blood imbrued,  
(Forth welling from the wound, as prone he lay)  
And in the victor's hands the shining prey. [flies,  
Sheath'd in bright arms, through cleaving ranks he  
And sends his voice in thunder to the skies:  
Fierce as a flood of flame by Vulcan sent,  
It flew, and fired the nations as it went.  
Atrides from the voice the storm divined,  
And thus explored his own unconquer'd mind—

‘ Then shall I quit Patroclus on the plain,  
Slain in my cause, and for my honour slain!  
Desert the arms, the reliques, of my friend?  
Or singly Hector and his troops attend?  
Sure, where such partial favour Heaven bestow'd,  
To brave the hero were to brave the god:  
Forgive me, Greece, if once I quit the field;  
’Tis not to Hector, but to Heaven, I yield.  
Yet, nor the god, nor Heaven, should give me fear,  
Did but the voice of Ajax reach my ear:  
Still would we turn, still battle on the plains,  
And give Achilles all that yet remains  
Of his and our Patroclus—This, no more,  
The time allow'd: Troy thicken'd on the shore,

A sable scene! The terrors Hector led.  
Glow he recedes, and, sighing, quits the dead.

So from the fold the unwilling lion parts,  
Forced by loud clamours, and a storm of darts;  
He flies indeed, but threatens as he flies,  
With heart indignant and retorted eyes.  
Now enter'd in the Spartan ranks, he turn'd  
His manly breast, and with new fury burn'd,  
O'er all the black battalions sent his view,  
And through the cloud the godlike Ajax knew;  
Where labouring on the left the warrior stood,  
All grim in arms, and cover'd o'er with blood;  
There breathing courage, where the god of day  
Had sunk each heart with terror and dismay.

To him the king—‘ Oh Ajax, oh my friend!  
Haste, and Patroclus’ loved remains defend:  
The body to Achilles to restore  
Demands our care; alas, we can no more!  
For naked now, despoil’d of arms, he lies;  
And Hector glories in the dazzling prize.’  
He said, and touch’d his heart. The raging pair  
Pierce the thick battle, and provoke the war.  
Already had stern Hector seized his head,  
And doom’d to Trojan dogs the unhappy dead;  
But soon as Ajax rear’d his tower-like shield,  
Sprung to his car, and measured back the field.  
His train to Troy the radiant armour bear,  
To stand a trophy of his fame in war. [play’d]

Meanwhile great Ajax (his broad shield dis-  
Guards the dead hero with the dreadful shade;  
And now before, and now behind he stood:  
Thus in the centre of some gloomy wood,  
With many a step, the lioness surrounds  
Her tawny young, beset by men and hounds;

Elate her heart, and rousing all her powers,  
Dark o'er the fiery balls each hanging eyebrow  
lowers.

Fast by his side the generous Spartan glows  
With great revenge, and feeds his inward woes.

But Glaucus, leader of the Lycian aids,  
On Hector frowning, thus his flight upbraids—  
‘Where now in Hector shall we Hector find?  
A manly form, without a manly mind.

Is this, O chief! a hero’s boasted fame?  
How vain, without the merit, is the name!

Since battle is renounced, thy thoughts employ,  
What other methods may preserve thy Troy:

‘Tis time to try if Ilion’s state can stand  
By thee alone, nor ask a foreign hand:  
Mean, empty boast! but shall the Lycians stake  
Their lives for you? those Lycians you forsake?  
What from thy thankless arms can we expect?  
Thy friend Sarpedon proves thy base neglect:  
Say, shall our slaughter’d bodies guard your walls,  
While unrevenged the great Sarpedon falls?  
E’en where he died for Troy, you left him there,  
A feast for dogs, and all the fowls of air.

On my command if any Lycian wait,  
Hence let him march, and give up Troy to fate.  
Did such a spirit as the gods impart  
Impel one Trojan hand or Trojan heart,  
(Such as should burn in every soul that draws  
The sword for glory, and his country’s cause)  
E’en yet our mutual arms we might employ,  
And drag you carcass to the walls of Troy.  
Oh! were Patroclus ours, we might obtain  
Sarpedon’s arms and honour’d corpse again!  
Greece with Achilles’ friend should be repaid,  
And thus due honours purchased to his shade.

But words are vain—Let Ajax once appear,  
And Hector trembles and recedes with fear;  
Thou darest not meet the terrors of his eye;  
And lo! already thou preparest to fly.'

The Trojan chief with fix'd resentment eyed  
The Lycian leader, and sedate replied—

‘ Say, is it just, my friend, that Hector's ear  
From such a warrior such a speech should hear?  
I deem'd thee once the wisest of thy kind,  
But ill this insult suits a prudent mind.  
I shun great Ajax? I desert my train?  
'Tis mine to prove the rash assertion vain;  
I joy to mingle where the battle bleeds,  
And hear the thunder of the sounding steeds.  
But Jove's high will is ever uncontrol'd,  
The strong he withers, and confounds the bold;  
Now crowns with fame the mighty man, and now  
Strikes the fresh garland from the victor's brow!  
Come, through you squadrons let us hew the way,  
And thou be witness, if I fear to-day;  
If yet a Greek the sight of Hector dread,  
Or yet their hero dare defend the dead,’

Then, turning to the martial hosts, he cries—  
‘ Ye Trojans, Dardans, Lycians, and allies!  
Be men, my friends, in action as in name,  
And yet be mindful of your ancient fame.  
Hector in proud Achilles' arms shall shine,  
Torn from his friend, by right of conquest mine.’

He strode along the field, as thus he said:  
(The sable plumage nodded o'er his head)  
Swift through the spacious plain he sent a look;  
One instant saw, one instant overtook  
The distant band, that on the sandy shore  
The radiant spoils to sacred Ilion bore.

There his own mail unbraced the field bestrow'd;  
His train to Troy convey'd the massy load.  
Now blazing in the immortal arms he stands;  
The work and present of celestial hands;  
By aged Peleus to Achilles given,  
As first to Peleus by the court of Heaven:  
His father's arms not long Achilles wears,  
Forbid by fate to reach his father's years.

Him, proud in triumph, glittering from afar,  
The god whose thunder rends the troubled air  
Beheld with pity; as apart he sat, [fate.  
And, conscious, look'd through all the scene of  
He shook the sacred honours of his head;  
Olympus trembled, and the godhead said—

‘ Ah, wretched man! unmindful of thy end!  
A moment's glory! and what fates attend!  
In heavenly panoply divinely bright  
Thou stand'st, and armies tremble at thy sight,  
As at Achilles' self! beneath thy dart  
Lies slain the great Achilles' dearer part:  
Thou from the mighty dead those arms hast torn,  
Which once the greatest of mankind hast worn.  
Yet live! I give thee one illustrious day,  
A blaze of glory ere thou fadest away.  
For ah! no more Andromachè shall come  
With joyful tears to welcome Hector home;  
No more officious, with endearing charms,  
From thy tired limbs unbrace Pelides' arms!’

Then with his sable brow he gave the nod  
That seals his word; the sanction of the god.  
The stubborn arms (by Jove's command disposed)  
Conform'd spontaneous, and around him closed:  
Fill'd with the god, enlarged his members grew,  
Through all his veins a sudden vigour flew,

The blood in brisker tides began to roll,  
And Mars himself came rushing on his soul.  
Exhorting loud through all the field he strode,  
And look'd, and moved, Achilles, or a god.  
Now Mesthles, Glaucus, Medon, he inspires,  
Now Phoreys, Chromius, and Hippothous fires;  
The great Thersilochns like fury found,  
Asteropæus kindled at the sound,  
And Ennomus, in angury renown'd.

‘ Hear, all ye hosts, and hear, unnumber'd bands  
Of neighbouring nations, or of distant lands!  
’Twas not for state we summon'd you so far,  
To boast our numbers, and the pomp of war:  
Ye came to fight, a valiant foe to chase,  
To save our present and our future race.  
For this, our wealth, our products, you enjoy,  
And glean the relics of exhausted Troy.  
Now, then, to conquer or to die prepare;  
To die or conquer are the terms of war.  
Whatever hand shall win Patroclus slain,  
Whoe'er shall drag him to the Trojan train,  
With Hector's self shall equal honours claim;  
With Hector part the spoil, and share the fame.’

Fired by his words, the troops dismiss their fears,  
They join, they thicken, they pretend their spears;  
Full on the Greeks they drive in firm array,  
And each from Ajax hopes the glorious prey:  
Vain hope! what numbers shall the field o'er-spread,

What victims perish round the mighty dead!

Great Ajax mark'd the growing storm from far,  
And thus bespoke his brother of the war—  
‘ Our fatal day, alas! is come, my friend;  
And all our wars and glories at an end!

'Tis not this corse alone we guard in vain,  
Condemn'd to vultures on the Trojan plain;  
We too must yield: the same sad fate must fall  
On thee, on me, perhaps, my friend, on all.  
See what a tempest direful Hector spreads,  
And lo! it bursts, it thunders on our heads!  
Call on our Greeks, if any hear the call,  
The bravest Greeks: this hour demands them all.'

The warrior raised his voice, and wide around  
The field re-echoed the distressful sound.

'O chiefs! O princes! to whose hand is given  
The rule of men; whose glory is from Heaven!  
Whom with due honours both Atrides grace:  
Ye guides and guardians of our Argive race!  
All, whom this well-known voice shall reach from  
far,

All, whom I see not through this cloud of war;  
Come all! let generous rage your arms employ,  
And save Patroclus from the dogs of Troy.'

Oilean Ajax first the voice obey'd,  
Swift was his pace, and ready was his aid;  
Next him Idomeneus, more slow with age,  
And Merion, burning with a hero's rage.  
The long-succeeding numbers who can name?  
But all were Greeks, and eager all for fame.  
Fierce to the charge great Hector led the throng;  
Whole Troy embodied rush'd with shouts along.  
Thus, when a mountain billow foams and raves,  
Where some swoln river disembogues his waves,  
Full in the mouth is stopp'd the rushing tide,  
The boiling ocean works from side to side,  
The river trembles to his utmost shore,  
And distant rocks rebellow to the roar.

Nor less resolved, the firm Achaian band  
With brazen shields in horrid circle stand.

Jove, pouring darkness o'er the mingled fight,  
Conceals the warriors' shining helms in night:  
To him, the chief for whom the hosts contend  
Had lived not hateful, for he lived a friend:  
Dead, he protects him with superior care,  
Nor dooms his carcass to the birds of air.

The first attack the Grecians scarce sustain,  
Repulsed, they yield; the Trojans seize the slain:  
Then fierce they rally, to revenge led on  
By the swift rage of Ajax Telamon.

(Ajax to Peleus' son the second name,  
In graceful stature, next, and next in fame)  
With headlong force the foremost ranks he tore;  
So through the thicket bursts the mountain boar,  
And rudely scatters, far to distance round,  
The frightened hunter and the baying hound.  
The son of Lethus, brave Pelasgus' heir,  
Hippothous, dragg'd the carcass through the war;  
The sinewy ankles bored, the feet he bound  
With thongs inserted through the double wound:  
Inevitable fate o'ertakes the deed;  
Doom'd by great Ajax' vengeful lance to bleed;  
It cleft the helmet's brazen cheeks in twain;  
The shatter'd crest and horse-hair strow the plain:  
With nerves relax'd he tumbles to the ground:  
The brain comes gushing through the ghastly  
wound:

He drops Patroclus' foot, and o'er him spread  
Now lies a sad companion of the dead:  
Far from Larissa lies, his native air,  
And ill requites his parent's tender care.  
Lamented youth! in life's first bloom he fell,  
Sent by great Ajax to the shades of hell.

Once more at Ajax, Hector's javelin flies;  
The Grecian marking, as it cut the skies,

Shunn'd the descending death; which hissing on,  
Stretch'd in the dust the great Iphytus' son,  
Schedius the brave; of all the Phocian kind  
The boldest warrior and the noblest mind:  
In little Panopè, for strength renown'd,  
He held his seat, and ruled the realms around.  
Plunged in his throat, the weapon drank his blood,  
And deep transpiercing through the shoulder  
In clangor arms the hero fell, and all [stood;  
The fields resounded with his weighty fall.

Phorcys, as slain Hippothous he defends,  
The Telamonian lance his belly rends;  
The hollow armour burst before the stroke,  
And through the wound the rushing entrails broke:  
In strong convulsions panting on the sands  
He lies, and grasps the dust with dying hands.

Struck at the sight, recede the Trojan train:  
The shouting Argives strip the heroes slain.  
And now had Troy, by Greece compell'd to yield,  
Fled to her ramparts, and resign'd the field;  
Greece, in her native fortitude elate,  
With Jove averse, had turn'd the scale of Fate;  
But Phœbus urged Æneas to the fight:  
He seem'd like aged Periphas to sight;  
(A herald in Anchises' love grown old,  
Revered for prudence, and with prudence bold).

Thus he—‘What methods yet, O chief! remain,  
To save your Troy, though Heaven its fall ordain?  
There have been heroes, who, by virtuous care,  
By valour, numbers, and by arts of war,  
Have forced the powers to spare a sinking state,  
And gain'd at length the glorious odds of Fate.  
But you, when Fortune smiles, when Jove declares  
His partial favour, and assists your wars,

Your shameful efforts 'gainst yourselves employ,  
And force the unwilling god to ruin Troy.'

Aeneas through the form assumed desirous  
The power conceal'd, and thus to Hector cries—  
' Oh lasting shame! to our own fears a prey,  
We seek our ramparts, and desert the day.  
A god, nor is he less, my bosom warms,  
And tells me, Jove asserts the Trojan arms.'

He spoke, and foremost to the combat flew;  
The bold example all his hosts pursue.  
Then, first, Lcoeritus beneath him bled,  
In vain beloved by valiant Lycomedes;  
Who view'd his fall, and, grieving at the chance,  
Swift to revenge it sent his angry lance:  
The whirling lance, with vigorous force address'd,  
Descends, and pants in Apisaon's breast:  
From rich Paeonia's vales the warrior came,  
Next thee, Asteropeus! in place and fame.  
Asteropeus with grief beheld the slain,  
And rush'd to combat, but he rush'd in vain:  
Indissolubly firm, around the dead,  
Rank within rank, on buckler buckler spread,  
And hemm'd with bristled spears, the Grecians  
A brazen bulwark, and an iron wood. [stood;  
Great Ajax eyes them with incessant care,  
And in an orb contracts the crowded war,  
Close in their ranks commands to fight or fall,  
And stands the centre and the soul of all:  
Fix'd on the spot they war, and, wounded, wound;  
A sanguine torrent steeps therecking ground:  
On heaps the Greeks, on heaps the Trojans bled,  
And, thickening round them, rise the hills of dead.

Greece, in close order, and collected might,  
Yet suffers least, and sways the wavering fight;

Fierce as conflicting fires the combat burns,  
And now it rises, now it sinks by turns.  
In one thick darkness all the fight was lost;  
The sun, the moon, and all the' ethereal host  
Seem'd as extinct: day ravish'd from their eyes,  
And all heaven's splendours blotted from the skies.  
Such o'er Patroclus' body hung the night,  
The rest in sunshine fought, and open light;  
Unclouded there, the' aerial azure spread,  
No vapour rested on the mountain's head,  
The golden sun pour'd forth a stronger ray,  
And all the broad expansion flamed with day.  
Dispersed around the plain, by fits they fight,  
And here and there the scatter'd arrows light:  
But death and darkness o'er the carcass spread,  
There burn'd the war, and there the mighty bled.

Meanwhile the sons of Nestor in the rear  
(Their fellows routed) toss the distant spear,  
And skirmish wide: so Nestor gave command,  
When from the ships he sent the Pylian band.  
The youthful brothers thus for fame contend,  
Nor knew the fortune of Achilles' friend;  
In thought they view'd him still, with martial joy,  
Glorious in arms, and dealing death to Troy.

But round the corse the heroes pant for breath,  
And thick and heavy grows the work of death:  
O'erlabour'd now, with dust, and sweat, and gore,  
Their knees, their legs, their feet, are cover'd o'er;  
Drops follow drops, the clouds on clouds arise,  
And carnage clogs their hands, and darkness  
fills their eyes.

As when a slaughter'd bull's yet-reeking hide,  
Strain'd with full force, and tugg'd from side to side,  
The brawny curriers stretch; and labour o'er  
The' extended surface, drunk with fat and gore;

So tugging round the corpse both armies stood ;  
The mangled body bathed in sweat and blood :  
While Greeks and Ilians equal strength employ,  
Now to the ships to force it, now to Troy.  
Not Pallas' self, her breast when fury warms,  
Nor he whose anger sets the world in arms,  
Could blame this scene ; such rage, such horror  
reign'd ;

Such Jove, to honour the great dead, ordain'd.

Achilles in his ships at distance lay,  
Nor knew the fatal fortune of the day ;  
He, yet unconscious of Patroclus' fall,  
In dust extended under Ilion's wall,  
Expects him glorious from the conquer'd plain,  
And for his wish'd return prepares in vain ;  
Though well he knew, to make proud Ilion bend  
Was more than Heaven had destined to his friend,  
Perhaps to him : this Thetis had reveal'd ;  
The rest, in pity to her son, conceal'd.

Still raged the conflict round the hero dead,  
And heaps on heaps by mutual wounds they bled.  
' Cursed be the man (e'en private Greeks would  
Who dares desert this well-disputed day. [say])  
First may the cleaving earth before our eyes  
Gape wide, and drink our blood for sacrifice ;  
First perish all, ere haughty Troy shall boast  
We lost Patroclus, and our glory lost !'

Thus they : while with one voice the Trojans said,  
' Grant this day, Jove ! or heap us on the dead !'

Then clash their sounding arms, the clangors rise,  
And shake the brazen concave of the skies.

Meantime, at distance from the scene of blood,  
The pensive steeds of great Achilles stood ;  
Their godlike master slain before their eyes,  
They wept, and shared in human miseries.

In vain Automedon now shakes the rein,  
Now plies the lash, and sooths and threats in vain ;  
Nor to the fight nor Hellespont they go,  
Restive they stood, and obstinate in woe :  
Still as a tombstone, never to be moved,  
On some good man or woman unreproved  
Lay its eternal weight ; or fix'd as stands  
A marble courser by the sculptor's hands,  
Placed on the hero's grave. Along their face  
The big round drops coursed down with silent pace,  
Conglobing on the dust. Their manes that late  
Circled their arched necks, and waved in state,  
Trail'd on the dust beneath the yoke were spread,  
And prone to earth was hung their languid head :  
Nor Jove disdain'd to cast a pitying look,  
While thus relenting to the steeds he spoke—

‘ Unhappy coursers of immortal strain !  
Exempt from age, and deathless, now in vain ;  
Did we your race on mortal man bestow,  
Only, alas ! to share in mortal woe ?  
For ah ! what is there of inferior birth,  
That breathes or creeps upon the dust of earth ;  
What wretched creature, of what wretched kind,  
Than man more weak, calamitous, and blind ?  
A miserable race ! but cease to mourn :  
For not by you shall Priam's son be borne  
High on the splendid car : one glorious prize  
He rashly boasts : the rest our will denies.  
Ourself will swiftness to your nerves impart,  
Ourself with rising spirits swell your heart.  
Automedon your rapid flight shall bear  
Safe to the navy through the storm of war.  
For yet 'tis given to Troy to ravage o'er  
The field, and spread her slaughters to the shore ;

The sun shall see her conquer, till his fall  
With sacred darkness shades the face of all.'

He said; and breathing in the' immortal horse  
Excessive spirit, urged them to the course; [bear  
From their high manes they shake the dust, and  
The kindling chariot through the parted war:  
So flies a vulture through the clamorous train  
Of geese, that scream and scatter round the plain.  
From danger now with swiftest speed they flew,  
And now to conquest with like speed pursue:  
Sole in the seat the charioteer remains,  
Now plies the javelin, now directs the reins:  
Him brave Alcimedon beheld distress'd,  
Approach'd the chariot, and the chief address'd:

' What god provokes thee rashly thus to dare,  
Alone, unaided, in the thickest war?  
Alas! thy friend is slain, and Hector wields  
Achilles' arms triumphant in the fields.'

' In happy time (the charioteer replies)  
The bold Alcimedon now greets my eyes;  
No Greek like him the heavenly steeds restrains,  
Or holds their fury in suspended reins:  
Patroclus, while he lived, their rage could tame,  
But now Patroclus is an empty name!  
To thee I yield the seat, to thee resign  
The ruling charge: the task of fight be mine.'

He said. Alcimedon, with active heat,  
Snatches the reins, and vaults into the seat.  
His friend descends. The chief of Troy despaired,  
And call'd Æneas fighting near his side.  
' Lo, to my sight beyond our hope restored,  
Achilles' car, deserted of its lord!  
The glorious steeds our ready arms invite, [fight:  
Scarce their weak drivers guide them through the

Can such opponents stand when we assail?  
Unite thy force, my friend, and we prevail.'

The son of Venus to the counsel yields;  
Then o'er their backs they spread their solid  
shields;

With brass resplendent the broad surface shined,  
And thick bull-hides the spacious concave lined.  
Them Chromius follows, Aretus succeeds;  
Each hopes the conquest of the lofty steeds:  
In vain, brave youths, with glorious hopes ye burn,  
In vain advance! not fated to return.

Unmoved, Automedon attends the fight,  
Implores the' Eternal, and collects his might.  
Then turning to his friend, with dauntless mind—  
‘ Oh keep the foaming coursers close behind!  
Full on my shoulders let their nostrils blow,  
For hard the fight, determined is the foe;  
‘ Tis Hector comes; and when he seeks the prize,  
War knows no mean: he wins it or he dies.’

Then through the field he sends his voice aloud,  
And calls the' Ajaes from the warring crowd,  
With great Atrides. ‘ Hither turn (he said),  
Turn where distress demands immediate aid;  
The dead, encircled by his friends, forego,  
And save the living from a fiercer foe.  
Unhelp'd we stand, unequal to engage  
The force of Hector, and Æneas' rage:  
Yet mighty as they are, my force to prove  
Is only mine: the' event belongs to Jove.’

He spoke, and high the sounding javelin flung,  
Which pass'd the shield of Aretus the young:  
It pierced his belt, emboss'd with curious art;  
Then in the lower belly stuck the dart.  
As when a ponderous axe, descending full,  
Cleaves the broad forehead of some brawny bull;

Struck 'twixt the horns, he springs with many a bound,

Then tumbling rolls enormous on the ground:  
Thus fell the youth; the air his soul received,  
And the spear trembled as his entrails heaved.

Now at Automedon the Trojan foe  
Discharged his lance; the meditated blow,  
Stooping, he shun'd; the javelin idly fled,  
And hiss'd innoxious o'er the hero's head;  
Deep rooted in the ground, the forceful spear  
In long vibrations spent its fury there.

With clashing falchions now the chiefs had closed,  
But each brave Ajax heard, and interposed;  
Nor longer Hector with his Trojans stood,  
But left their slain companion in his blood:  
His arms Automedon divests, and cries,  
'Accept, Patroclus! this mean sacrifice:  
Thus have I sooth'd my griefs, and thus have paid,  
Poor as it is, some offering to thy shade.'

So looks the lion o'er a mangled boar,  
All grim with rage, and horrible with gore;  
High on the chariot at one bound he sprung,  
And o'er his seat the bloody trophies hung.

And now Minerva from the realms of air  
Descends impetuous, and renew's the war;  
For, pleased at length the Grecian arms to aid,  
The lord of thunders sent the blue-eyed maid.  
As when high Jove denouncing future woe,  
O'er the dark clouds extends his purple bow,  
(In sign of tempests from the troubled air,  
Or, from the rage of man, destructive war)  
The drooping cattle dread the' impending skies,  
And from his half-till'd field the labourer flies;  
In such a form the goddess round her drew  
A livid cloud, and to the battle flew.

Assuming Phœnix' shape on earth she falls,  
And in his well-known voice to Sparta calls :  
' And lies Achilles' friend, beloved by all,  
A prey to dogs beneath the Trojan wall ?  
What shame to Greece for future times to tell,  
To thee the greatest in whose cause he fell !'

' O chief, O father ! (Atreus' son replies)  
O full of days ! by long experience wise !  
What more desires my soul, than here unmoved  
To guard the body of the man I loved ?  
Ah, would Minerva send me strength to rear  
This wearied arm, and ward the storm of war !  
But Hector, like the rage of fire, we dread,  
And Jove's own glories blaze around his head.'

Pleased to be first of all the powers address'd,  
She breathes new vigour in her hero's breast,  
And fills with keen revenge, with fell despite,  
Desire of blood, and rage, and lust of fight.  
So burns the vengeful hornet (soul all o'er),  
Repulsed in vain, and thirsty still of gore ;  
(Bold son of air and heat) on angry wings,  
Untamed, untired, he turns, attacks, and stings.  
Fired with like ardour fierce Atrides flew,  
And sent his soul with every lance he threw.

There stood a Trojan, not unknown to fame,  
Eëtion's son, and Podes was his name :  
With riches honour'd, and with courage bless'd,  
By Hector loved, his comrade and his guest ;  
Through his broad belt the spear a passage found,  
And, ponderous as he falls, his arms resound.  
Sudden at Hector's side Apollo stood,  
Like Phœnops, Asius' son, appear'd the god ;  
(Asius the great, who held his wealthy reign  
In fair Abydos, by the rolling main).

‘ O prince (he cried), O foremost once in fame !  
What Grecian now shall tremble at thy name ?  
Dost thou at length to Menelaüs yield,  
A chief once thought no terror of the field ;  
Yet singly, now, the long disputed prize  
He bears victorious, while our army flies :  
By the same arm illustrious Podes bled ;  
The friend of Hector, unrevenged, is dead !’  
This heard, o’er Hector spreads a cloud of woe,  
Rage lifts his lance, and drives him on the foe.

But now the’ Eternal shook his sable shield,  
That shaded Ide and all the subject field  
Beneath its ample verge. A rolling cloud  
Involved the mount ; the thunder roar’d aloud ;  
The’ affrighted hills from their foundations nod,  
And blaze beneath the lightnings of the god :  
At one regard of his all-seeing eye  
The vanquish’d triumph, and the victors fly.

Then trembled Greece : the flight Peneleus led ;  
For as the brave Bœotian turn’d his head  
To face the foe, Polydamas drew near,  
And razed his shoulder with a shorten’d spear :  
By Hector wounded, Leitus quits the plain,  
Pierced through the wrist ; and raging with the  
    pain,

Grasps his once formidable lance in vain.

As Hector follow’d, Idomen address’d  
The flaming javelin to his manly breast ;  
The brittle point before his corselet yields ;  
Exulting Troy with clamour fills the fields :  
High on his chariot as the Cretan stood,  
The son of Priam whirl’d the missive wood ;  
But erring from its aim, the’ impetuous spear  
Struck to the dust the squire and charioteer

Of martial Merion: Cœranus his name,  
Who left fair Lyctus for the fields of fame.  
On foot bold Merion fought; and now laid low,  
Had graced the triumphs of his Trojan foe;  
But the brave squire the ready coursers brought,  
And with his life his master's safety bought.  
Between his cheek and ear the weapon went,  
The teeth it shatter'd, and the tongue it rent.  
Prone from the seat he tumbles to the plain;  
His dying hand forgets the falling rein:  
This Merion reaches, bending from the car,  
And urges to desert the hopeless war:  
Idomeneus consents; the lash applies;  
And the swift chariot to the navy flies.

Nor Ajax less the will of Heaven descried,  
And conquest shifting to the Trojan side,  
Turn'd by the hand of Jove. Then thus begun,  
To Atreus' seed, the godlike Telamon—

‘ Alas! who sees not Jove's almighty hand  
Transfers the glory to the Trojan band?  
Whether the weak or strong discharge the dart,  
He guides each arrow to a Grecian heart:  
Not so our spears; incessant though they rain,  
He suffers every lance to fall in vain.  
Deserted of the god, yet let us try  
What human strength and prudence can supply;  
If yet this honour'd corse, in triumph borne,  
May glad the fleets that hope not our return,  
Who tremble yet, scarce rescued from their fates,  
And still hear Hector thundering at their gates.  
Some hero too must be dispatch'd to bear  
The mournful message to Pelides' ear;  
For sure he knows not, distant on the shore,  
His friend, his loved Patroclus, is no more.

But such a chief I spy not through the host:  
The men, the steeds, the armies, all are lost  
In general darkness——Lord of earth and air!  
O king! O father! hear my humble prayer:  
Dispel this cloud, the light of heaven restore;  
Give me to see, and Ajax asks no more:  
If Greece must perish, we thy will obey,  
But let us perish in the face of day!

With tears the hero spoke, and at his prayer  
The god relenting clear'd the clouded air;  
Forth burst the Sun with all-enlightening ray;  
The blaze of armour flash'd against the day.  
‘Now, now, Atrides! cast around thy sight;  
If yet Antilochus survives the fight,  
Let him to great Achilles' ear convey  
The fatal news.’——Atrides hastens away.

So turns the lion from the nightly fold,  
Though high in courage, and with hunger bold,  
Long gall'd by herdsmen, and long vex'd by  
hounds,  
Stiff with fatigue, and fretted sore with wounds;  
The darts fly round him from a hundred hands,  
And the red terrors of the blazing brands:  
Till late, reluctant, at the dawn of day  
Sour he departs, and quits the untasted prey.  
So moved Atrides from his dangerous place  
With weary limbs, but with unwilling pace;  
The foe, he fear'd, might yet Patroclus gain,  
And much admonish'd, much adjured his train:

‘O guard these relics to your charge consign'd,  
And bear the merits of the dead in mind;  
How skill'd he was in each obliging art;  
The mildest manners, and the gentlest heart:  
He was, alas! but Fate decreed his end,  
In death a hero, as in life a friend!’

So parts the chief; from rank to rank he flew,  
And round on all sides sent his piercing view.  
As the bold bird, endued with sharpest eye  
Of all that wing the mid aerial sky,  
The sacred eagle, from his walks above  
Looks down, and sees the distant thicket move;  
Then stoops, and sousing on the quivering hare,  
Snatches his life amid the clouds of air;  
Not with less quickness, his exerted sight [fight:  
Pass'd this, and that way, through the ranks of  
Till on the left the chief he sought, he found,  
Cheering his men, and spreading deaths around:

To him the king—‘ Beloved of Jove! draw near,  
For sadder tidings never touch'd thy ear;  
Thy eyes have witness'd, what a fatal turn!  
How Ilion triumphs, and the Achaians mourn.  
This is not all: Patroclus, on the shore  
Now pale and dead, shall succour Greece no more.  
Fly to the fleet, this instant fly, and tell  
The sad Achilles, how his loved one fell:  
He too may haste the naked corpse to gain:  
The arms are Hector's, who despoil'd the slain.’

The youthful warrior heard with silent woe,  
From his fair eyes the tears began to flow:  
Big with the mighty grief, he strove to say  
What sorrow dictates, but no word found way.  
To brave Laodocus his arms he flung,  
Who, near him wheeling, drove his steeds along;  
Then ran, the mournful message to impart,  
With tearful eyes, and with dejected heart.

Swift fled the youth: nor Menelaüs stands  
(Though sore distress'd) to aid the Pylian bands;  
But bids bold Thrasymede those troops sustain;  
Himself returns to his Patroclus slain.

‘Gone is Antilochus (the hero said);  
But hope not, warriors, for Achilles’ aid: .  
Though fierce his rage, unbounded be his woe,  
Unarm’d, he fights not with the Trojan foe.  
’Tis in our hands alone our hopes remain,  
’Tis our own vigour must the dead regain;  
And save ourselves, while with impetuous hate  
Troy pours along, and this way rolls our fate.’

‘ ’Tis well (said Ajax), be it then thy care,  
With Merion’s aid, the weighty corse to rear;  
Myself, and my bold brother, will sustain  
The shock of Hector and his charging train:  
Nor fear we armies, fighting side by side;  
What Troy can dare, we have already tried,  
Have tried it, and have stood.’ The hero said.  
High from the ground the warriors heave the dead.  
A general clamour rises at the sight:  
Loud shout the Trojans, and renew the fight.  
Not fiercer rush along the gloomy wood,  
With rage insatiate and with thirst of blood,  
Voracious hounds, that many a length before  
Their furious hunters drive the wounded boar;  
But if the savage turns his glaring eye,  
They howl aloof, and round the forest fly.  
Thus on retreating Greece the Trojans pour,  
Wave their thick falchions, and their javelins  
shower:

But Ajax turning, to their fears they yield,  
All pale they tremble, and forsake the field.

While thus aloft the hero’s corse they bear,  
Behind them rages all the storm of war;  
Confusion, tumult, horror, o’er the throng  
Of men, steeds, chariots, urged the rout along:

Less fierce the winds with rising flames conspire  
To whelm some city under waves of fire;  
Now sink in gloomy clouds the proud abodes,  
Now crack the blazing temples of the gods;  
The rumbling torrent through the ruin rolls,  
And sheets of smoke mount heavy to the poles.  
The heroes sweat beneath their honour'd load:  
As when two mules, along the rugged road,  
From the steep mountain with exerted strength  
Drag some vast beam, or mast's unwieldy length;  
Inly they groan, big drops of sweat distil,  
The' enormous timber lumbering down the hill:  
So these—Behind, the bulk of Ajax stands,  
And breaks the torrent of the rushing bands.  
Thus when a river swell'd with sudden rains  
Spreads his broad waters o'er the level plains,  
Some interposing hill the stream divides,  
And breaks its force, and turns the winding tides.  
Still close they follow, close the rear engage;  
Æneas storms, and Hector foams with rage:  
While Greece a heavy, thick retreat maintains,  
Wedged in one body, like a flight of cranes,  
That shriek incessant while the falcon, hung  
High on poised pinions, threatens their callow young.  
So from the Trojan chiefs the Grecians fly,  
Such the wild terror, and the mingled cry:  
Within, without the trench, and all the way,  
Strow'd in bright heaps, their arms and armour lay;  
Such horror Jove impress'd! yet still proceeds  
The work of death, and still the battle bleeds.

## BOOK XVIII.

## The Argument.

## THE GRIEF OF ACHILLES, AND NEW ARMOUR MADE HIM BY VULCAN.

The news of the death of Patroclus is brought to Achilles by Antilochus. Thetis, hearing his lamentations, comes with all her sea-nymphs to comfort him. The speeches of the mother and son on this occasion. Iris appears to Achilles by the command of Juno, and orders him to show himself at the head of the intrenchments. The sight of him turns the fortune of the day, and the body of Patroclus is carried off by the Greeks. The Trojans call a council, where Hector and Polydamas disagree in their opinions; but the advice of the former prevails, to remain encamped in the field. The grief of Achilles over the body of Patroclus.

Thetis goes to the palace of Vulcan to obtain new arms for her son. The description of the wonderful works of Vulcan; and, lastly, that noble one of the shield of Achilles.

The latter part of the nine and twentieth day, and the night ensuing, take up this book. The scene is at Achilles' tent on the sea-shore, from whence it changes to the palace of Vulcan.

THUS like the rage of fire the combat burns,  
And now it rises, now it sinks by turns.  
Meanwhile, where Hellespont's broad waters flow,  
Stood Nestor's son the messenger of woe:  
There sat Achilles, shaded by his sails,  
On hoisted yards extended to the gales;  
Pensive he sat; for all that Fate design'd  
Rose in sad prospect to his boding mind.  
Thus to his soul he said—‘Ah! what constrains  
The Greeks, late victors, now to quit the plains!

Is this the day, which Heaven so long ago  
Ordain'd, to sink me with the weight of woe?  
(So Thetis warn'd) when by a Trojan hand  
The bravest of the Myrmidonian band  
Should lose the light? Fulfill'd is that decree;  
Fallen is the warrior, and Patroclus he!  
In vain I charged him soon to quit the plain,  
And warn'd to shun Hectorean force in vain!"

Thus while he thinks, Antilochus appears,  
And tells the melancholy tale with tears.

' Sad tidings, son of Peleus! thou must hear;  
And wretched I, the unwilling messenger!  
Dead is Patroclus! For his corse they fight;  
His naked corse: his arms are Hector's right.'

A sudden horror shot through all the chief,  
And wrapp'd his senses in the cloud of grief;  
Cast on the ground, with furious hands he spread  
The scorching ashes o'er his graceful head;  
His purple garments, and his golden hairs,  
Those he deforms with dust, and these he tears;  
On the hard soil his groaning breast he threw,  
And roll'd and grovel'd, as to earth he grew.  
The virgin captives, with disorder'd charms,  
(Won by his own, or by Patroclus' arms) [round,  
Rush'd from the tents with cries; and, gathering  
Beat their white breasts, and fainted on the ground:  
While Nestor's son sustains a manlier part,  
And mourns the warrior with a warrior's heart;  
Hangs on his arms, amidst his frantic woe,  
And oft prevents the meditated blow.

Far in the deep abysses of the main,  
With hoary Nereus, and the watery train,  
The mother-goddess from her crystal throne  
Heard his loud cries, and answer'd groan for groan.

The circling Nereids with their mistress weep,  
And all the sea-green sisters of the deep.  
Thalia, Glaucè (every watery name),  
Nesæa mild, and silver Spio came:  
Cymothoë and Cymodoce were nigh,  
And the blue languish of soft Alia's eye.  
Their locks Actæa and Limnoria rear,  
Then Proto, Doris, Panopè, appear,  
Thoä, Pherusa, Doto, Melita;  
Agave gentle, and Amphithoë gay:  
Next Callianira, Callianassa show  
Their sister looks; Dexamenè the slow,  
And swift Dynamenè, now cut the tides:  
Iæra now the verdant wave divides:  
Nemertes with Apseudes lifts the head,  
Bright Galatea quits her pearly bed;  
These Orythia, Clymenè, attend,  
Mæra, Amphinomè, the train extend;  
And black Janira, and Janassa fair,  
And Amatheia with her amber hair.  
All these, and all that deep in ocean held  
Their sacred seats, the glimmering grotto fill'd;  
Each beat her ivory breast with silent woe,  
Till Thetis' sorrows thus began to flow—

‘ Hear me, and judge, ye sisters of the main!  
How just a cause has Thetis to complain!  
How wretched, were I mortal, were my fate!  
How more than wretched in the’ immortal state!  
Sprung from my bed a godlike hero came,  
The bravest far that ever bore the name;  
Like some fair olive, by my careful hand  
He grew, he flourish'd, and adorn'd the land:  
To Troy I sent him; but the Fates ordain  
He never, never must return again.

So short a space the light of heaven to view,  
So short, alas! and fill'd with anguish too!  
Hear how his sorrows echo through the shore!  
I cannot ease them, but I must deplore;  
I go at least to bear a tender part,  
And mourn my loved one with a mother's heart.'

She said, and left the caverns of the main,  
All bathed in tears; the melancholy train  
Attend her way. Wide-opening part the tides,  
While the long pomp the silver wave divides.  
Approaching now, they touch'd the Trojan land;  
Then, two by two, ascended up the strand.  
The immortal mother, standing close beside  
Her mournful offspring, to his sighs replied;  
Along the coast their mingled clamours ran,  
And thus the silver-footed dame began—

‘Why mourns my son? thy late preferr'd request  
The god has granted, and the Greeks distress'd:  
Why mourns my son? thy anguish let me share,  
Reveal the cause, and trust a parent's care.’

He, deeply groaning—‘To this cureless grief,  
Not e'en the thunderer's favour brings relief.  
Patroclus—Ah!—say, goddess, can I boast  
A pleasure now? revenge itself is lost;  
Patroclus, loved of all my martial train,  
Beyond mankind, beyond myself, is slain!  
Lost are those arms the gods themselves bestow'd  
On Peleus; Hector bears the glorious load.  
Cursed be that day, when all the powers above  
Thy charms submitted to a mortal love:  
O hadst thou still, a sister of the main,  
Pursued the pleasures of the watery reign;  
And happier Peleus, less ambitious, led  
A mortal beauty to his equal bed!

Ere the sad fruit of thy unhappy womb  
Had caused such sorrows past, and woes to come.  
For soon, alas ! that wretched offspring slain,  
New woes, new sorrows, shall create again.  
'Tis not in Fate the' alternate now to give;  
Patroclus dead, Achilles hates to live.  
Let me revenge it on proud Hector's heart,  
Let his last spirit smoke upon my dart;  
On these conditions will I breathe: till then,  
I blush to walk among the race of men.'

A flood of tears, at this, the goddess shed:  
' Ah then, I see thee dying, see thee dead !  
When Hector falls, thou diest.'—' Let Hector die,  
And let me fall ! (Achilles made reply)  
Far lies Patroclus from his native plain !  
He fell, and, falling, wish'd my aid in vain.  
Ah then, since from this miserable day  
I cast all hope of my return away;  
Since, unrevenged, a hundred ghosts demand  
The fate of Hector from Achilles' hand;  
Since here, for brutal courage far renown'd,  
I live an idle burden to the ground,  
(Others in council famed for nobler skill,  
More useful to preserve, than I to kill)  
Let me—But oh ! ye gracious powers above !  
Wrath and revenge from men and gods remove :  
Far, far too dear to every mortal breast,  
Sweet to the soul, as honey to the taste;  
Gathering like vapours of a noxious kind  
From fiery blood, and darkening all the mind.  
Me Agamemnon urged to deadly hate;  
'Tis pass'd—I quell it; I resign to Fate.  
Yes—I will meet the murderer of my friend;  
Or (if the gods ordain it) meet my end.

The stroke of Fate the bravest cannot shun :  
The great Alcides, Jove's unequal'd son,  
To Juno's hate at length resign'd his breath,  
And sunk the victim of all-conquering death.  
So shall Achilles fall ! stretch'd pale and dead,  
No more the Grecian hope, or Trojan dread !  
Let me, this instant, rush into the fields,  
And reap what glory life's short harvest yields.  
Shall I not force some widow'd dame to tear  
With frantic hands her long dishevel'd hair ?  
Shall I not force her breasts to heave with sighs,  
And the soft tears to trickle from her eyes ?  
Yes, I shall give the fair those mournful charms—  
In vain you hold me—Hence ! my arms, my  
arms !—

Soon shall the sanguine torrent spread so wide,  
That all shall know, Achilles swells the tide.'

‘ My son (cerulean Thetis made reply,  
To Fate submitting with a secret sigh),  
The host to succour, and thy friends to save,  
Is worthy thee; the duty of the brave.  
But canst thou, naked, issue to the plains ?  
Thy radiant arms the Trojan foe detains.  
Insulting Hector bears the spoils on high,  
But vainly glories, for his fate is nigh.  
Yet, yet a while, thy generous ardour stay;  
Assured, I meet thee at the dawn of day,  
Charged with resplendent arms (a glorious load),  
Vulcanian arms, the labour of a god.’

Then turning to the daughters of the main,  
The goddess thus dismiss'd her azure train.

‘ Ye sister Nereids ! to your deeps descend;  
Haste, and our father's sacred seat attend;  
I go to find the architect divine,  
Where vast Olympus' starry summits shine :

So tell our hoary sire:—This charge she gave:  
The sea-green sisters plunge beneath the wave:  
Thetis once more ascends the bless'd abodes,  
And treads the brazen threshold of the gods.'

And now the Greeks, from furious Hector's force,  
Urge to broad Hellespont their headlong course;  
Nor yet their chiefs Patroclus' body bore  
Safe through the tempest to the tented shore.  
The horse, the foot, with equal fury join'd,  
Pour'd on the rear, and thunder'd close behind:  
And, like a flame through fields of ripen'd corn,  
The rage of Hector o'er the ranks was borne.  
Thrice the slain hero by the foot he drew;  
Thrice to the skies the Trojan clamours flew:  
As oft the' Ajaces his assault sustain;  
But check'd, he turns; repulsed, attacks again.  
With fiercer shouts his lingering troops he fires,  
Nor yields a step, nor from his post retires:  
So watchful shepherds strive to force, in vain,  
The hungry lion from a carcass slain.  
E'en yet Patroclus had he borne away,  
And all the glories of the' extended day,  
Had not high Juno, from the realms of air,  
Secret, dispatch'd her trusty messenger.  
The various goddess of the showery bow,  
Shot in a whirlwind to the shore below;  
To great Achilles at his ships she came,  
And thus began the many-colour'd dame—

‘Rise, son of Peleus! rise divinely brave!  
Assist the combat, and Patroclus save:  
For him the slaughter to the fleet they spread,  
And fall by mutual wounds around the dead.  
To drag him back to Troy the foe contends:  
Nor with his death the rage of Hector ends:

A prey to dogs he dooms the corse to lie,  
And marks the place to fix his head on high.  
Rise, and prevent (if yet you think of fame)  
Thy friend's disgrace, thy own eternal shame!'

‘Who sends thee, goddess, from the’ ethereal  
Achilles thus. And Iris thus replies— [skies?]

‘I come, Pelides! from the queen of Jove,  
The’ immortal empress of the realms above;  
Unknown to him who sits remote on high,  
Unknown to all the synod of the sky.’  
‘Thou comest in vain, (he cries, with fury warm’d),  
Arms I have none; and can I fight unarm’d?  
Unwilling as I am, of force I stay,  
Till Thetis bring me at the dawn of day  
Vulcanian arms: what other can I wield;  
Except the mighty Telamonian shield?  
That, in my friend’s defence, has Ajax spread,  
While his strong lance around him heaps the dead:  
The gallant chief defends Menoetius’ son,  
And does what his Achilles should have done.’

‘Thy want of arms (said Iris) well we know,  
But though unarm’d, yet clad in terrors, go!  
Let but Achilles o’er yon trench appear;  
Proud Troy shall tremble, and consent to fear:  
Greece from one glanee of that tremendous eye  
Shall take new courage, and disdain to fly.’

She spoke, and pass’d in air. The hero rose:  
Her ægis Pallas o’er his shoulder throws;  
Around his brows a golden cloud she spread;  
A stream of glory flamed above his head.  
As when from some beleaguer’d town arise  
The smokes, high-curling to the shaded skies  
(Seen from some island, o’er the main afar,  
When men distress’d hang out the sign of war);

Soon as the Sun in ocean hides his rays,  
Thick on the hills the flaming beacons blaze;  
With long-projected beams the seas are bright,  
And heaven's high arch reflects the ruddy light;  
So from Achilles' head the splendours rise,  
Reflecting blaze on blaze against the skies.  
Forth march'd the chief, and distant from the  
crowd,

High on the rampart raised his voice aloud;  
With her own shout Minerva swells the sound;  
Troy starts astonish'd, and the shores rebound.  
As the loud trumpet's brazen mouth from far  
With shrilling clangor sounds the' alarm of war,  
Struck from the walls, the echoes float on high,  
And the round bulwarks and thick towers reply;  
So high his brazen voice the hero rear'd:  
Hosts dropp'd their arms, and trembled as they  
heard;

And back the chariots roll, and coursers bound,  
And steeds and men lie mingled on the ground.  
Aghast they see the living lightnings play,  
And turn their eyeballs from the flashing ray.  
Thrice from the trench his dreadful voice he raised;  
And thrice they fled, confounded and amazed.  
Twelve in the tumult wedged, untimely rush'd  
On their own spears, by their own chariots crush'd:  
While, shielded from the darts, the Greeks obtain  
The long-contended carcass of the slain.

A lofty bier the breathless warrior bears:  
Around, his sad companions melt in tears.  
But chief Achilles, bending down his head,  
Pours unavailing sorrows o'er the dead,  
Whom late triumphant, with his steeds and car,  
He sent resplendent to the field of war;

(Unhappy change !) now senseless, pale, he found,  
Stretch'd forth, and gash'd with many a gaping  
wound.

Meantime, unwearied with his heavenly way,  
In ocean's waves the' unwilling light of day  
Quench'd his red orb, at Juno's high command,  
And from their labours eased the' Achaian band.  
The frightened Trojans (panting from the war,  
Their steeds unharness'd from the weary car)  
A sudden council call'd : each chief appear'd  
In baste, and standing; for to sit they fear'd.  
'Twas now no season for prolong'd debate;  
They saw Achilles, and in him their fate.  
Silent they stood: Polydamas at last,  
Skill'd to discern the future by the past,  
The son of Panthus, thus express'd his fears;  
(The friend of Hector, and of equal years:  
The self-same night to both a being gave,  
One wise in council, one in action brave).

‘ In free debate, my friends, your sentence  
speak;

For me, I move, before the morning break,  
To raise our camp: too dangerous here our post,  
Far from Troy walls, and on a naked coast.  
I deem'd not Greece so dreadful, while engaged  
In mutual feuds her king and hero raged;  
Then, while we hoped our armies might prevail,  
We boldly camp'd beside a thousand sail,  
I dread Pelides now: his rage of mind  
Not long continues to the shores confined,  
Nor to the fields, where long in equal fray  
Contending nations won and lost the day;  
For Troy, for Troy, shall henceforth be the strife,  
And the hard contest not for fame, but life.

Haste then to Ilion, while the favouring night  
Detains those terrors, keeps that arm from fight;  
If but the morrow's sun behold us here,  
That arm, those terrors, we shall feel, not fear;  
And hearts that now disdain, shall leap with joy,  
If Heaven permit them then to enter Troy.  
Let not my fatal prophecy be true,  
Nor what I tremble but to think, ensue.  
Whatever be our fate, yet let us try  
What force of thought and reason can supply;  
Let us on counsel for our guard depend;  
The town her gates and bulwarks shall defend.  
When morning dawns, our well-appointed powers,  
Array'd in arms, shall line the lofty towers.  
Let the fierce hero then, when fury calls,  
Vent his mad vengeance on our rocky walls,  
Or fetch a thousand circles round the plain,  
Till his spent coursers seek the fleet again:  
So may his rage be tired, and labour'd down;  
And dogs shall tear him ere he sack the town.'

‘Return? (said Hector, fired with stern disdain)  
What! coop whole armies in our walls again?  
Was't not enough, ye valiant warriors, say,  
Nine years imprison'd in those towers ye lay?  
Wide o'er the world was Ilion famed of old  
For brass exhaustless, and for mines of gold:  
But while inglorious in her walls we stay'd,  
Sunk were her treasures, and her stores decay'd;  
The Phrygians now her scatter'd spoils enjoy,  
And proud Mæonia wastes the fruits of Troy.  
Great Jove at length my arms to conquest calls,  
And shuts the Grecians in their wooden walls:  
Darest thou dispirit whom the gods incite?  
Flies any Trojan? I shall stop his flight.

To better counsel then attention lend;  
Take due refreshment, and the watch attend.  
If there be one whose riches cost him eare,  
Forth let him bring them for the troops to share;  
'Tis better generously bestow'd on those,  
Than left the plunder of our country's foes.  
Soon as the morn the purple orient warms,  
Fierce on yon navy will we pour our arms.  
If great Achilles rise in all his might,  
His be the danger: I shall stand the fight.  
Honour, ye gods! or let me gain, or give;  
And live he glorious, whosoe'er shall live!  
Mars is our common lord, alike to all;  
And oft the victor triumphs, but to fall.'

The shouting host in loud applauses join'd:  
So Pallas robb'd the many of their mind;  
To their own sense condemn'd, and left to choose  
The worst advice, the better to refuse.

While the long night extends her sable reign,  
Around Patroclus mourn'd the Grecian train.  
Stern in superior grief Pelides stood;  
Those slaughtering arms, so used to bathe in blood,  
Now clasp his clay-cold limbs: then gushing start  
The tears, and sighs burst from his swelling heart.  
The lion thus, with dreadful anguish stung,  
Roars through the desert, and demands his young;  
When the grim savage, to his rifled den  
Too late returning, snuff's the track of men,  
And o'er the vales and o'er the forest bounds;  
His clamorous grief the bellowing wood resounds.  
So grieves Achilles; and, impetuous, vents  
To all his Myrmidons his loud laments.

' In what vain promise, gods! did I engage,  
When, to console Menœtius' feeble age,

I vow'd his much-loved offspring to restore,  
Charged with rich spoils, to fair Opuntia's shore?  
But mighty Jove cuts short, with just disdain,  
The long, long views of poor designing man!  
One fate the warrior and the friend shall strike,  
And Troy's black sands must drink our blood  
alike:

Me too a wretched mother shall deplore,  
An aged father never see me more!  
Yet, my Patroclus! yet a space I stay,  
Then swift pursue thee on the darksome way.  
Ere thy dear relics in the grave are laid,  
Shall Hector's head be offer'd to thy shade;  
That, with his arms, shall hang before thy shrine;  
And twelve the noblest of the Trojan line,  
Sacred to vengeance, by this hand expire;  
Their lives effused around thy flaming pyre.  
Thus let me lie till then! thus, closely press'd,  
Bathe thy cold face, and sob upon thy breast!  
While Trojan captives here thy mourners stay,  
Weep all the night, and murmur all the day:  
Spoils of my arms, and thine; when, wasting wide,  
Our swords kept time, and conquer'd side by side.'

He spoke, and bid the sad attendants round  
Cleanse the pale corpse, and wash each honour'd  
A massy caldron of stupendous frame [wound.  
They brought, and placed it o'er the rising flame:  
Then heap'd the lighted wood; the flame divides  
Beneath the vase, and climbs around the sides:  
In its wide womb they pour the rushing stream;  
The boiling water bubbles to the brim.  
The body then they bathe with pious toil,  
Embalm the wounds, anoint the limbs with oil,  
High on a bed of state extended laid,  
And decent covered with a linen shade;

Last o'er the dead the milk-white veil they threw;  
That done, their sorrows and their sighs renew.

Meanwhile to Juno, in the realms above,  
(His wife and sister) spoke almighty Jove.

‘ At last thy will prevails: great Peleus’ son  
Rises in arms: such grace thy Greeks have won.  
Say, (for I know not) is their race divine,  
And thou the mother of that martial line?’ [plies,

‘ What words are these! (the’ imperial dame re-  
While anger flash’d from her majestic eyes)  
Succour like this a mortal arm might lend,  
And such success mere human wit attend:  
And shall not I, the second power above,  
Heaven’s queen, and consort of the thundering  
Jove,

Say, shall not I one nation’s fate command,  
Not wreak my vengeance on one guilty land?’

So they. Meanwhile the silver-footed dame  
Reach’d the Vulcanian dome, eternal frame!  
High-eminent amid the works divine, [shine.  
Where heaven’s far-beaming brazen mansions  
There the lame architect the goddess found,  
Obscure in smoke, his forges flaming round.  
While bathed in sweat, from fire to fire he flew;  
And puffing loud, the roaring bellows blew.  
That day no common task his labour claim’d:  
Full twenty tripods for his hall he framed,  
That, placed on living wheels of massy gold,  
(Wondrous to tell) instinct with spirit roll’d  
From place to place, around the bless’d abodes,  
Self-moved, obedient to the beck of gods:  
For their fair handles now, o’erwrought with  
flowers,

In moulds prepared, the glowing ore he pours.

Just as responsive to his thought the frame  
Stood prompt to move, the azure goddess came:  
Charis, his spouse, a grace divinely fair,  
(With purple fillets round her braided hair)  
Observed her entering; her soft hand she press'd,  
And, smiling, thus the watery queen address'd—

‘ What, goddess! this unusual favour draws ?  
All hail, and welcome! whatsoe'er the cause:  
Till now a stranger, in a happy hour  
Approach, and taste the dainties of the bower.’

High on a throne, with stars of silver graced,  
And various artifice, the queen she placed;  
A footstool at her feet: then calling, said,  
‘ Vulcan, draw near, 'tis Thetis asks your aid.’  
‘ Thetis (replied the god) our powers may claim,  
An ever-dear, an ever-honour'd name!  
When my proud mother hurl'd me from the sky,  
(My awkward form, it seems, displeased her eye)  
She, and Eurynomè, my griefs redress'd,  
And soft received me on their silver breast.  
E'en then, these arts employ'd my infant thought;  
Chains, bracelets, pendants, all their toys I  
wrought.

Nine years kept secret in the dark abode,  
Secure I lay, conceal'd from man and god:  
Deep in a cavern'd rock my days were led;  
The rushing ocean murmur'd o'er my head.  
Now, since her presence glads our mansion, say,  
For such desert what service can I pay?  
Vouchsafe, O Thetis! at our board to share  
The genial rites, and hospitable fare;  
While I the labours of the forge forego,  
And bid the roaring bellows cease to blow.’

Then from his anvil the lame artist rose;  
Wide with distorted legs oblique he goes,

And stills the bellows, and (in order laid)  
Locks in their chests his instruments of trade.  
Then with a sponge the sooty workman dress'd  
His brawny arms imbrown'd, and hairy breast.  
With his huge sceptre graced, and red attire,  
Came halting forth the sovereign of the fire:  
The monarch's steps two female forms uphold,  
That moved, and breathed in animated gold;  
To whom was voice, and sense, and science given,  
Of works divine, (such wonders are in heaven!)  
On these supported, with unequal gait,  
He reach'd the throne where pensive Thetis sat;  
There placed beside her on the shining frame,  
He thus address'd the silver-footed dame—

‘ Thee, welcome goddess! what occasion calls  
(So long a stranger) to these honour'd walls?  
’Tis thine, fair Thetis, the command to lay,  
And Vulcan's joy and duty to obey.’

To whom the mournful mother thus replies—  
(The crystal drops stood trembling in her eyes)  
‘ O Vulcan! say, was ever breast divine  
So pierced with sorrows, so o'erwhelm'd as mine?  
Of all the goddesses, did Jove prepare  
For Thetis only such a weight of care?  
I, only I, of all the watery race,  
By force subjected to a man's embrace,  
Who, sinking now with age and sorrow, pays  
The mighty fine imposed on length of days.  
Sprung from my bed, a godlike hero came,  
The bravest sure that ever bore the name;  
Like some fair plant beneath my careful hand  
He grew, he flourish'd, and he graced the land:  
To Troy I sent him! but his native shore  
Never, ah never, shall receive him more;

(E'en while he lives, he wastes with secret woe)  
Nor I, a goddess, can retard the blow!  
Robb'd of the prize the Grecian suffrage gave,  
The king of nations forced his royal slave:  
For this he grieved; and, till the Greeks oppress'd  
Required his arm, he sorrow'd unredress'd.  
Large gifts they promise, and their elders send;  
In vain—He arms not, but permits his friend  
His arms, his steeds, his forces to employ:  
He marches, combats, almost conquers Troy:  
Then slain by Phœbus (Hector had the name)  
At once resigns his armour, life, and fame.  
But thou, in pity, by my prayer be won:  
Grace with immortal arms this short-lived son,  
And to the field in martial pomp restore,  
To shine with glory, till he shines no more!'

To her the artist-god—' Thy griefs resign,  
Secure, what Vulcan can, is ever thine.  
O could I hide him from the Fates as well,  
Or with these hands the cruel stroke repel,  
As I shall forge most envied arms, the gaze  
Of wondering ages, and the world's amaze!'

Thus having said, the father of the fires  
To the black labours of his forge retires.  
Soon as he bade them blow, the bellows turn'd  
Their iron mouths; and, where the furnace burn'd,  
Resounding breathed: at once the blast expires,  
And twenty forges catch at once the fires;  
Just as the god directs, now loud, now low,  
They raise a tempest, or they gently blow;  
In hissing flames huge silver bars are roll'd,  
And stubborn brass, and tin, and solid gold:  
Before, deep fix'd, the eternal anvils stand;  
The ponderous hammer loads his better hand,

His left with tongs turns the vex'd metal round,  
And thick, strong strokes, the doubling vaults  
rebound.

Then first he form'd the' immense and solid  
shield;

Rich various artifice emblazed the field;  
Its utmost verge a threefold circle bound;  
A silver chain suspends the massy round;  
Five ample plates the broad expanse compose,  
And godlike labours on the surface rose.

There shone the image of the master-mind:  
There earth, there heaven, there ocean, he design'd;  
The' unwearied sun, the moon completely round;  
The starry lights that heaven's high convex  
crown'd;

The Pleiads, Hyads, with the northern team;  
And great Orion's more resplendent beam;  
To which, around the axle of the sky,  
The Bear, revolving, points his golden eye,  
Still shines exalted on the' ethereal plain,  
Nor bathes his blazing forehead in the main.

Two cities radiant on the shield appear,  
The image one of peace, and one of war.  
Here sacred pomp and genial feast delight,  
And solemn dance, and hymeneal rite;  
Along the street the new-made brides are led,  
With torches flaming, to the nuptial bed:  
The youthful dancers in a circle bound  
To the soft flute and cithern's silver sound:  
Through the fair streets the matrons in a row  
Stand in their porches, and enjoy the show.

There in the forum swarm a numerous train;  
The subject of debate, a townsman slain:  
One pleads the fine discharged, which one denied,  
And bade the public and the laws decide:

The witness is produced on either hand :  
For this, or that, the partial people stand :  
The appointed heralds still the noisy bands,  
And form a ring, with sceptres in their hands :  
On seats of stone, within the sacred place,  
The reverend elders nodded o'er the case ;  
Alternate, each the attesting sceptre took,  
And rising solemn, each his sentence spoke :  
Two golden talents lay amidst, in sight,  
The prize of him who best adjudged the right.

Another part (a prospect differing far)  
Glow'd with resplendent arms, and horrid war.  
Two mighty hosts a leaguer'd town embrace,  
And one would pillage, one would burn the place.  
Meantime the townsmen, arm'd with silent care,  
A secret ambush on the foe prepare :  
Their wives, their children, and the watchful band  
Of trembling parents, on the turrets stand.  
They march ; by Pallas and by Mars made bold :  
Gold were the gods, their radiant garments gold,  
And gold their armour : these the squadron led,  
August, divine, superior by the head !  
A place for ambush fit they found, and stood  
Cover'd with shields, beside a silver flood.  
Two spies at distance lurk, and watchful seem  
If sheep or oxen seek the winding stream.  
Soon the white flocks proceeded o'er the plains,  
And steers slow moving, and two shepherd swains ;  
Behind them, piping on their reeds, they go,  
Nor fear an ambush, nor suspect a foe.  
In arms the glittering squadron rising round  
Rush sudden ; hills of slaughter heap the ground ;  
Whole flocks and herds lie bleeding on the plains,  
And, all amidst them, dead, the shepherd swains !

The bellowing oxen the besiegers hear ;  
They rise, take horse, approach, and meet the war ;  
They fight, they fall, beside the silver flood ;  
The waving silver seem'd to blush with blood.  
There Tumult, there Contention stood confess'd ;  
One rear'd a dagger at a captive breast ;  
One held a living foe, that freshly bled  
With new made wounds ; another dragg'd a dead ;  
Now here, now there, the carcasses they tore :  
Fate stalk'd amidst them, grim with human gore,  
And the whole war came out, and met the eye ;  
And each bold figure seem'd to live, or die.

A field deep furrow'd next the god design'd,  
The third time labour'd by the sweating hind ;  
The shining shares full many ploughmen guide,  
And turn their crooked yokes on every side.  
Still as at either end they wheel around,  
The master meets them with his goblet crown'd ;  
The hearty draught rewards, renews their toil,  
Then back the turning ploughshares cleave the  
Behind, the rising earth in ridges roll'd ; [soil :  
And sable look'd, though form'd of molten gold.

Another field rose high with waving grain ;  
With bended sickles stand the reaper train :  
Here stretch'd in ranks the level'd swarths are  
found,  
Sheaves heap'd on sheaves here thicken up the  
ground.

With sweeping stroke the mowers strow the lands ;  
The gatherers follow, and collect in bands ;  
And last the children, in whose arms are borne  
(Too short to gripe them) the brown sheaves of  
The rustic monarch of the field descries [corn.  
With silent glee the heaps around him rise.

A ready banquet on the turf is laid,  
Beneath an ample oak's expanded shade.  
The victim ox the sturdy youth prepare ;  
The reaper's due repast, the women's care.

Next, ripe in yellow gold, a vineyard shines,  
Bent with the ponderous harvest of its vines ;  
A deeper dye the dangling clusters show,  
And, curl'd on silver props, in order glow :  
A darker metal mix'd intrench'd the place ;  
And pales of glittering tin the' enclosure grace.  
To this, one pathway gently winding leads,  
Where march a train with baskets on their heads,  
(Fair maids and blooming youths) that smiling bear  
The purple product of the' autumnal year.  
To these a youth awakes the warbling strings,  
Whose tender lay the fate of Linus sings ;  
In measured dance behind him move the train,  
Tune soft the voice, and answer to the strain.

Here herds of oxen march, erect and bold,  
Rear high their horns, and seem to low in gold,  
And speed to meadows on whose sounding shores  
A rapid torrent through the rushes roars :  
Four golden herdsmen as their guardians stand,  
And nine sour dogs complete the rustic band.  
Two lions rushing from the wood appear'd,  
And seized a bull, the master of the herd :  
He roar'd : in vain the dogs, the men withstood ;  
They tore his flesh, and drank his sable blood.  
The dogs (oft cheer'd in vain) desert the prey,  
Dread the grim terrors, and at distance bay.

Next this, the eye the art of Vulcan leads  
Deep through fair forests, and a length of meads ;  
And stalls, and folds, and scatter'd cots between ;  
And fleecy flocks, that whiten all the scene.

A figured dance succeeds: such once was seen  
In lofty Gnossus, for the Cretan queen,  
Form'd by Dædalean art: a comely band  
Of youths and maidens, bounding hand in hand.  
The maids in soft simars of linen dress'd;  
The youths all graceful in the glossy vest:  
Of those the locks with flowery wreaths enroll'd:  
Of these the sides adorn'd with swords of gold,  
That, glittering gay, from silver belts depend.  
Now all at once they rise, at once descend,  
With well-taught feet: now shape, in oblique ways,  
Confusedly regular, the moving maze:  
Now forth at once, too swift for sight, they spring,  
And undistinguish'd blend the flying ring:  
So whirls a wheel, in giddy circle toss'd,  
And, rapid as it runs, the single spokes are lost.  
The gazing multitudes admire around:  
Two active tumblers in the centre bound;  
Now high, now low, their pliant limbs they bend:  
And general songs the sprightly revel end.

Thus the broad shield complete the artist  
crown'd

With his last hand, and pour'd the ocean round:  
In living silver seem'd the waves to roll,  
And beat the buckler's verge, and bound the whole.

This done, whate'er a warrior's use requires  
He forged: the cuirass that outshines the fires,  
The greaves of ductile tin, the helm impress'd  
With various sculpture, and the golden crest.  
At Thetis' feet the finish'd labour lay:  
She, as a falcon, cuts the aerial way,  
Swift from Olympus' snowy summit flies,  
And bears the blazing present through the skies.

## BOOK XIX.

## The Argument.

## THE RECONCILIATION OF ACHILLES AND AGAMEMNON.

Thetis brings to her son the armour made by Vulcan. She preserves the body of his friend from corruption, and commands him to assemble the army, to declare his resentment at an end. Agamemnon and Achilles are solemnly reconciled: the speeches, presents, and ceremonies on that occasion. Achilles is with great difficulty persuaded to refrain from the battle till the troops have refreshed themselves, by the advice of Ulysses. The presents are conveyed to the tent of Achilles; where Briseis laments over the body of Patroclus. The hero obstinately refuses all repast, and gives himself up to lamentations for his friend. Minerva descends to strengthen him, by the order of Jupiter. He arms for the fight: his appearance described. He addresses himself to his horses, and reproaches them with the death of Patroclus. One of them is miraculously endowed with voice, and inspired to prophesy his fate; but the hero, not astonished by that prodigy, rushes with fury to the combat.

The thirtieth day. The scene is on the seashore.

SOON as Aurora heaved her orient head  
Above the waves, that blush'd with early red,  
(With new-born day to gladden mortal sight,  
And gild the courts of heaven with sacred light)  
The immortal arms the goddess mother bears  
Swift to her son: her son she finds in tears  
Stretch'd o'er Patroclus' corpse; while all the rest  
The sovereign's sorrows in their own express'd.  
A ray divine her heavenly presence shed,  
And thus, his hand soft touching, Thetis said—

‘ Suppress, my son, this rage of grief, and know  
It was not man, but Heaven that gave the blow;

Behold what arms by Vulcan are bestow'd,  
Arms worthy thee, or fit to grace a god.'

Then drops the radiant burden on the ground ;  
Clang the strong arms, and ring the shores around :  
Back shrink the Myrmidons with dread surprise,  
And from the broad effulgence turn their eyes.  
Unmoved, the hero kindles at the show,  
And feels with rage divine his bosom glow ;  
From his fierce eyeballs living flames expire,  
And flash incessant like a stream of fire :  
He turns the radiant gift : and feeds his mind  
On all the' immortal artist had design'd. [shine

' Goddess ! (he cried) these glorious arms, that  
With matchless art, confess the hand divine.  
Now to the bloody battle let me bend :  
But ah ! the reliques of my slaughter'd friend !  
In those wide wounds through which his spirit fled,  
Shall flies, and worms obscene, pollute the dead ?'

' That unavailing care be laid aside,  
(The azure goddess to her son replied)  
Whole years untouched, uninjured shall remain,  
Fresh as in life, the carcass of the slain.  
But go, Achilles, as affairs require,  
Before the Grecian peers renounce thine ire :  
Then uncontrol'd in boundless war engage,  
And Heaven with strength supply the mighty  
rage !'

Then in the nostrils of the slain she pour'd  
Nectareous drops, and rich ambrosia shower'd  
O'er all the corse. The flies forbid their prey,  
Untouch'd it rests, and sacred from decay.  
Achilles to the strand obedient went :  
The shores resounded with the voice he sent.  
The heroes heard, and all the naval train  
That tend the ships, or guide them o'er the main,

Alarm'd, transported, at the well-known sound,  
Frequent and full, the great assembly crown'd;  
Studious to see that terror of the plain,  
Long lost to battle, shine in arms again.

Tydides and Ulysses first appear,  
Lame with their wounds, and leaning on the spear;  
These on the sacred seats of council placed,  
The king of men, Atrides, came the last:  
He too sore wounded by Agenor's son.  
Achilles (rising in the midst) begun:

‘ O monarch! better far had been the fate  
Of thee, of me, of all the Grecian state,  
If (ere the day when by mad passion sway'd,  
Rash we contended for the black-eyed maid)  
Preventing Dian had dispatch'd her dart,  
And shot the shining mischief to the heart!  
Then many a hero had not press'd the shore,  
Nor Troy's glad fields been fatten'd with our gore:  
Long, long shall Greece the woes we caused be-  
And sad posterity repeat the tale. [wail,  
But this, no more the subject of debate,  
Is pass'd, forgotten, and resign'd to Fate:  
Why should, alas, a mortal man, as I,  
Burn with a fury that can never die?  
Here then my anger ends: let war succeed,  
And e'en as Greece has bled, let Ilion bleed.  
Now call the hosts, and try if in our sight  
Troy yet shall dare to camp a second night.  
I deem their mightiest, when this arm he knows,  
Shall scape with transport, and with joy repose.’

He said: his finish'd wrath with loud acclaim  
The Greeks accept, and shout Pelides' name.  
When thus, not rising from his lofty throne,  
In state unmoved, the king of men begun,

‘Hear me, ye sons of Greece! with silence hear!  
And grant your monarch an impartial ear;  
A while your loud, untimely joy suspend,  
And let your rash, injurious clamours end:  
Unruly murmurs, or ill-timed applause,  
Wrong the best speaker, and the justest cause.  
Nor charge on me, ye Greeks, the dire debate:  
Know, angry Jove, and all-compelling Fate,  
With fell Erinnys, urged my wrath that day  
When from Achilles’ arms I forced the prey.  
What then could I against the will of Heaven?  
Not by myself, but vengeful Atè driven;  
She, Jove’s dread daughter, fated to infest  
The race of mortals, enter’d in my breast.  
Not on the ground that haughty fury treads,  
But prints her lofty footsteps on the heads  
Of mighty men; inflicting as she goes  
Long-festerling wounds, inextricable woes!  
Of old, she stalk’d amid the bright abodes;  
And Jove himself, the sire of men and gods,  
The world’s great ruler, felt her venom’d dart;  
Deceived by Juno’s wiles, and female art:  
For when Alcmena’s nine long months were run,  
And Jove expected his immortal son,  
To gods and goddesses the’ unruly joy  
He show’d, and vaunted of his matchless boy:  
“From us (he said) this day an infant springs,  
Fated to rule, and born a king of kings.”  
Saturnia ask’d an oath, to vouch the truth,  
And fix dominion on the favour’d youth.  
The thunderer, unsuspicuous of the fraud,  
Pronounced those solemn words that bind a god.  
The joyful goddess, from Olympus’ height,  
Swift to Achaian Argos bent her flight:

Scarce seven moons gone, lay Sthenelus's wife;  
She push'd her lingering infant into life:  
Her charms Alcmena's coming labours stay,  
And stop the babe, just issuing to the day.  
Then bids Saturnius bear his oath in mind:  
“A youth (said she) of Jove's immortal kind  
Is this day born: from Sthenelus he springs,  
And claims thy promise to be king of kings.”  
Grief seized the thunderer, by his oath engaged;  
Stung to the soul, he sorrow'd, and he raged.  
From his ambrosial head, where perch'd she sat,  
He snatch'd the fury-goddess of debate,  
The dread, the' irrevocable oath he swore,  
The' immortal seats should ne'er behold her more;  
And whirl'd her headlong down, for ever driven  
From bright Olympus and the starry heaven:  
Thence on the nether world the fury fell;  
Ordain'd with man's contentious race to dwell.  
Full oft the god his son's hard toils bemean'd,  
Cursed the dire fury, and in secret groan'd.  
E'en thus, like Jove himself, was I misled,  
While raging Hector heap'd our camps with dead.  
What can the errors of my rage atone?  
My martial troops, my treasures are thy own:  
This instant from the navy shall be sent  
Whate'er Ulysses promised at thy tent:  
But thou! appeased, propitious to our prayer,  
Resume thy arms, and shine again in war.”

‘O king of nations! whose superior sway  
(Returns Achilles) all our hosts obey!  
To keep or send the presents, be thy care;  
To us, 'tis equal: all we ask is war.  
While yet we talk, or but an instant shun  
The fight, our glorious work remains undone.

Let every Greek, who sees my spear confound  
The Trojan ranks, and deal destruction round,  
With emulation, what I act, survey,  
And learn from thence the business of the day.'

The son of Peleus thus; and thus replies  
The great in councils, Ithacus the wise—  
‘ Though, godlike, thou art by no toils oppress’d,  
At least our armies claim repast and rest:  
Long and laborious must the combat be,  
When by the gods inspired, and led by thee.  
Strength is derived from spirits and from blood,  
And those augment by generous wine and food:  
What boastful son of war, without that stay,  
Can last a hero through a single day?  
Courage may prompt; but, ebbing out his strength,  
Mere unsupported man must yield at length;  
Shrunk with dry famine, and with toils declined,  
The drooping body will desert the mind:  
But built anew with strength-conferring fare,  
With limbs and soul untamed, he tires a war.  
Dismiss the people, then, and give command,  
With strong repast to hearten every band;  
But let the presents to Achilles made,  
In full assembly of all Greece be laid.  
The king of men shall rise in public sight,  
And solemn swear (observant of the rite)  
That, spotless as she came, the maid removes,  
Pure from his arms, and guiltless of his loves.  
That done, a sumptuous banquet shall be made,  
And the full price of injured honour paid. [might  
Stretch not, henceforth, O prince! thy sovereign  
Beyond the bounds of reason and of right;  
‘ Tis the chief praise that e’er to kings belong’d,  
To right with justice whom with power they  
wrong’d.’

To him the monarch—‘ Just is thy decree,  
Thy words give joy, and wisdom breathes in thee.  
Each due atonement gladly I prepare ;  
And Heaven regard me as I justly swear !  
Here then a while let Greece assembled stay,  
Nor great Achilles grudge this short delay,  
Till from the fleet our presents be convey’d,  
And, Jove attesting, the firm compact made.  
A train of noble youth the charge shall bear ;  
These to select, Ulysses, be thy care :  
In order rank’d let all our gifts appear,  
And the fair train of captives close the rear :  
Talthybius shall the victim boar convey,  
Sacred to Jove, and yon bright orb of day.’

‘ For this (the stern Æacides replies)  
Some less important season may suffice,  
When the stern fury of the war is o’er,  
And wrath, extinguish’d, burns my breast no more.  
By Hector slain, their faces to the sky,  
All grim with gaping wounds, our heroes lie :  
Those call to war, and might my voice incite,  
Now, now, this instant should commence the fight :  
Then, when the day’s complete, let generous bowls,  
And copious banquets, glad your weary souls.  
Let not my palate know the taste of food  
Till my insatiate rage be eloy’d with blood :  
Pale lies my friend, with wounds disfigured o’er,  
And his cold feet are pointed at the door.  
Revenge is all my soul ! no meauer care,  
Interest, or thought, has room to harbour there ;  
Destruction be my feast, and mortal wounds,  
And scenes of blood, and agonizing sounds.’

‘ O first of Greeks (Ulysses thus rejoin’d),  
The best and bravest of the warrior kind !

Thy praise it is in dreadful camps to shine,  
But old experience, and calm wisdom, mine.  
Then hear my counsel, and to reason yield,  
The bravest soon are satiate of the field ;  
Though vast the heaps that strow the crimson  
The bloody harvest brings but little gain : [plain,  
The scale of conquest ever wavering lies,  
Great Jove but turns it, and the victor dies !  
The great, the bold, by thousands daily fall,  
And endless were the grief, to weep for all.  
Eternal sorrows what avails to shed ?  
Greece honours not with solemn fasts the dead :  
Enough, when death demands the brave, to pay  
The tribute of a melancholy day.  
One chief with patience to the grave resign'd,  
Our care devolves on others left behind.  
Let generous food supplies of strength produce,  
Let rising spirits flow from sprightly juice,  
Let their warm heads with scenes of battle glow,  
And pour new furies on the feebler foe.  
Yet a short interval, and none shall dare  
Expect a second summons to the war ;  
Who waits for that, the dire effect shall find,  
If trembling in the ships he lags behind.  
Embodyed, to the battle let us bend,  
And all at once on haughty Troy descend.'

And now the delegates Ulysses sent,  
To bear the presents from the royal tent :  
The sons of Nestor, Phyleus' valiant heir,  
Thias and Merion, thunderbolts of war,  
With Lycomedes of Creontian strain,  
And Melanippus, form'd the chosen train.  
Swift as the word was given, the youths obey'd ;  
Twice ten bright vases in the midst they laid ;

A row of six fair tripods then succeeds;  
And twice the number of high-bounding steeds;  
Seven captives next a lovely line compose;  
The eighth Briseïs, like the blooming rose,  
Closed the bright band: great Ithaeus, before,  
First of the train, the golden talents bore:  
The rest in public view the chiefs dispose,  
A splendid scene! then Agamemnon rose:  
The boar Talthybius held: the Grecian lord  
Drew the broad cutlass sheath'd beside his sword:  
The stubborn bristles from the victim's brow  
He crops, and offering meditates his vow.  
His hands uplifted to the' attesting skies,  
On heaven's broad marble roof were fix'd his eyes.  
The solemn words a deep attention draw,  
And Greece around sat thrill'd with sacred awe.

‘Witness thou first! thou greatest power above!  
All-good, all-wise, and all-surveying Jove!  
And mother-earth, and heaven's revolving light,  
And ye, fell furies of the realms of night,  
Who rule the dead, and horrid woes prepare  
For perjured kings, and all who falsely swear!  
The black-eyed maid inviolate removes,  
Pure and unconscious of my manly loves.  
If this be false, Heaven all its vengeance shed,  
And level'd thunder strike my guilty head! ’

With that, his weapon deep inflicts the wound;  
The bleeding savage tumbles to the ground;  
The sacred herald rolls the victim slain  
(A feast for fish) into the foaming main. [know

Then thus Achilles—‘Hear, ye Greeks! and  
Whate'er we feel, 'tis Jove inflicts the woe:  
Not else Atrides could our rage inflame,  
Nor from my arms, unwilling, force the dame.

'Twas Jove's high will alone, o'erruling all,  
That doom'd our strife, and doom'd the Greeks  
to fall.

Go then, ye chiefs ! indulge the genial rite ;  
Achilles waits ye, and expects the fight.'

The speedy council at his word adjourn'd :  
To their black vessels all the Greeks return'd.  
Achilles sought his tent. His train before  
March'd onward, bending with the gifts they bore.  
Those in the tents the squires industrious spread :  
The foaming coursers to the stalls they led ;  
To their new seats the female captives move :  
Briseïs, radiant as the queen of love,  
Slow as she pass'd, beheld with sad survey  
Where, gash'd with cruel wounds, Patroclus lay.  
Prone on the body fell the heavenly fair,  
Beat her sad breast, and tore her golden hair ;  
All beautiful in grief, her humid eyes  
Shining with tears she lifts, and thus she cries—

‘ Ah, youth for ever dear, for ever kind,  
Once tender friend of my distracted mind !  
I left thee fresh in life, in beauty gay ;  
Now find thee cold, inanimated clay !  
What woes my wretched race of life attend !  
Sorrows on sorrows, never doom'd to end !  
The first loved consort of my virgin bed  
Before these eyes in fatal battle bled :  
My three brave brothers in one mournful day  
All trod the dark, irremovable way :  
Thy friendly hand uprear'd me from the plain,  
And dried my sorrows for a husband slain ;  
Achilles' care you promised I should prove,  
The first, the dearest partner of his love ;  
That rites divine should ratify the band,  
And make me empress in his native land.

Accept these grateful tears ! for thee they flow,  
For thee, that ever felt another's woe !'

Her sister captives echoed groan for groan,  
Nor mourn'd Patroclus' fortunes, but their own.  
The leaders press'd the chief on every side;  
Unmoved, he heard them, and with sighs denied.

' If yet Achilles have a friend, whose care  
Is bent to please him, this request forbear :  
Till yonder sun descend, ah, let me pay  
To grief and anguish one abstemious day.'

He spoke, and from the warriors turn'd his face :  
Yet still the brother-kings of Atreus' race,  
Nestor, Idomeneus, Ulysses sage,  
And Phœnix, strive to calm his grief and rage :  
His rage they calm not, nor his grief control ;  
He groans, he raves, he sorrows from his soul.

' Thou too, Patroclus ! (thus his heart he vents)  
Once spread the' inviting banquet in our tents :  
Thy sweet society, thy winning care,  
Once stay'd Achilles rushing to the war.  
But now, alas ! to death's cold arms resign'd,  
What banquet but revenge can glad my mind ?  
What greater sorrow could afflict my breast,  
What more, if hoary Peleus were deceased ?  
Who now, perhaps, in Phthia dreads to hear  
His son's sad fate, and drops a tender tear.  
What more, should Neoptolemus the brave,  
My only offspring, sink into the grave ?  
If yet that offspring lives (I distant far,  
Of all neglectful, wage a hateful war).  
I could not this, this cruel stroke attend ;  
Fate claim'd Achilles, but might spare his friend.  
I hoped Patroclus might survive, to rear  
My tender orphan with a parent's care.

From Scyros' isle conduct him o'er the main,  
And glad his eyes with his paternal reign,  
The lofty palace, and the large domain :  
For Peleus breathes no more the vital air;  
Or drags a wretched life of age and care,  
But till the news of my sad fate invades  
His hastening soul, and sinks him to the shades.'

Sighing he said : his grief the heroes join'd,  
Each stole a tear for what he left behind.  
Their mingled grief the sire of heaven survey'd,  
And thus with pity, to his blue-eyed maid—

‘ Is then Achilles now no more thy care,  
And dost thou thus desert the great in war ?  
Lo, where yon sails their canvass wings extend,  
All comfortless he sits, and wails his friend :  
Ere thirst and want his forces have oppress'd,  
Haste and infuse ambrosia in his breast.’

He spoke ; and sudden, at the word of Jove,  
Shot the descending goddess from above.  
So swift through ether the shrill harpy springs,  
The wide air floating to her ample wings.  
To great Achilles she her flight address'd,  
And pour'd divine ambrosia in his breast,  
With nectar sweet, (refeotion of the gods !)  
Then, swift ascending, sought the bright abodes.

Now issued from the ships the warrior-train,  
And like a deluge pour'd upon the plain.  
As when the pierceng blasts of Boreas blow,  
And scatter o'er the fields the driving snow ;  
From dusky clouds the fleey winter flies,  
Whose dazzling lustre whitens all the skies ;  
So helms succeeding helms, so shields from  
shields,

Catch the quick beams, and brighten all the fields ;

Broad glittering breastplates, spears with pointed  
Mix in one stream, reflecting blaze on blaze : [rays,  
Thick beats the centre as the coursers bound ;  
With splendour flame the skies, and laugh the  
fields around.

Full in the midst, high-towering o'er the rest,  
His limbs in arms divine Achilles dress'd ;  
Arms which the father of the fire bestow'd,  
Forged on the' eternal anvils of the god.  
Grief and revenge his furious heart inspire,  
His glowing eyeballs roll with living fire ;  
He grinds his teeth, and furious with delay [day.  
O'erlooks the'embattled host, and hopes the bloody

The silver cuishes first his thighs infold :  
Then o'er his breast was braced the hollow gold :  
The brazen sword a various baldric tied,  
That, starr'd with gems, hung glittering at his side ;  
And, like the moon, the broad resplendent shield  
Blazed with long rays, and gleam'd athwart the  
field.

So to night-wandering sailors, pale with fears,  
Wide o'er the watery waste, a light appears,  
Which on the far-seen mountain blazing high,  
Streams from some lonely watch-tower to the sky :  
With mournful eyes they gaze, and gaze again ;  
Loud howls the storm, and drives them o'er the  
main.

Next, his high head the helmet graced ; behind  
The sweepy crest hung floating in the wind :  
Like the red star, that from his flaming hair  
Shakes down diseases, pestilence, and war ;  
So stream'd the golden honours from his head,  
Trembled the sparkling plumes, and the loose  
glories shed.

The chief beholds himself with wondering eyes;  
 His arms he poises, and his motions tries;  
 Buoy'd by some inward force, he seems to swim,  
 And feels a pinion lifting every limb.

And now he shakes his great paternal spear,  
 Ponderous and huge; which not a Greek could  
 From Pelion's cloudy top an ash entire [rear.  
 Old Chiron fell'd, and shaped it for his sire;  
 A spear which stern Achilles only wields,  
 The death of heroes, and the dread of fields.

Automedon and Alcimus prepare  
 The' immortal coursers, and the radiant car  
 (The silver traces sweeping at their side);  
 Their fiery mouths resplendent bridles tied,  
 The ivory-studded reins, return'd behind,  
 Waved o'er their backs, and to the chariot join'd.  
 The charioteer then whirl'd the lash around,  
 And swift ascended at one active bound.  
 All bright in heavenly arms, above his squire  
 Achilles mounts, and sets the field on fire;  
 Not brighter Phoebus in the' ethereal way  
 Flames from his chariot, and restores the day.  
 High o'er the host, all terrible he stands,  
 And thunders to his steeds these dread com-  
 mands—

‘ Xanthus and Balus! of Podarges’ strain  
 (Unless ye boast that heavenly race in vain),  
 Be swift, be mindful of the load ye bear,  
 And learn to make your master more your care:  
 Through falling squadrons bear my slaughtering  
 sword,

Nor, as ye left Patroclus, leave your lord.’

The generous Xanthus, as the words he said,  
 Seem'd sensible of woe, and droop'd his head:

Trembling he stood before the golden wain,  
And bow'd to dust the honours of his mane.  
When, strange to tell! (so Juno will'd) he broke  
Eternal silence, and portentous spoke.  
' Achilles! yes! this day at least we bear  
Thy rage in safety through the files of war:  
But come it will, the fatal time must come,  
Nor ours the fault, but God decrees thy doom.  
Not through our crime, or slowness in the course,  
Fell thy Patroclus, but by heavenly force;  
The bright far-shooting god who gilds the day  
(Confess'd we saw him) tore his arms away.  
No—could our swiftness o'er the winds prevail,  
Or beat the pinions of the western gale,  
All were in vain—the Fates thy death demand,  
Due to a mortal and immortal hand.'

Then ceased for ever, by the furies tied,  
His fateful voice. The' intrepid chief replied  
With unabated rage—' So let it be!  
Portents and prodigies are lost on me.  
I know my fate: to die, to see no more  
My much-loved parents, and my native shore—  
Enough—when Heaven ordains, I sink in night;  
Now perish Troy!' He said, and rush'd to fight.

## BOOK XX.

## The Argument.

## THE BATTLE OF THE GODS, AND THE ACTS OF ACHILLES.

Jupiter, upon Achilles' return to the battle, calls a council of the gods, and permits them to assist either party. The terrors of the combat described when the deities are engaged. Apollo encourages Æneas to meet Achilles. After a long conversation, these two heroes encounter; but Æneas is preserved by the assistance of Neptune. Achilles falls upon the rest of the Trojans, and is upon the point of killing Hector, but Apollo conveys him away in a cloud. Achilles pursues the Trojans with a great slaughter.

The same day continues. The scene is in the field before Troy.

THUS round Pelides breathing war and blood,  
Greece, sheath'd in arms, beside her vessels stood;  
While near impending from a neighbouring height,  
Troy's black battalions wait the shock of fight.  
Then Jove to Themis gives command, to call  
The gods to council in the starry hall:  
Swift o'er Olympus' hundred hills she flies,  
And summons all the senate of the skies.  
These shining on, in long procession come  
To Jove's eternal adamantine dome.  
Not one was absent, not a rural power  
That haunts the verdant gloom, or rosy bower,  
Each fair-hair'd dryad of the shady wood,  
Each azure sister of the silver flood;  
All but old Ocean, hoary sire! who keeps  
His ancient seat beneath the sacred deeps.  
On marble thrones, with lueid columus crown'd,  
(The work of Vulcan) sat the powers around.  
E'en he whose trident sways the watery reign  
Heard the loud summons, and forsook the main,

Assumed his throne amid the bright abodes,  
And question'd thus the sire of men and gods—

‘ What moves the god who heaven and earth  
commands,

And grasps the thunder in his awful hands,  
Thus to convene the whole ethereal state?

Is Greece and Troy the subject in debate?

Already met, the lowering hosts appear,  
And death stands ardent on the edge of war.’

‘ Tis true (the cloud-compelling power replies),  
This day we call the council of the skies  
In care of human race; e'en Jove's own eye  
Sees with regret unhappy mortals die.

Far on Olympus' top in secret state  
Ourself will sit, and see the hand of Fate  
Work out our will. Celestial powers, descend,  
And, as your minds direct, your succour lend  
To either host. Troy soon must lie o'erthrown,  
If uncontrol'd Achilles fights alone:  
Their troops but lately durst not meet his eyes;  
What can they now, if in his rage he rise?  
Assist them, gods! or Ilion's sacred wall  
May fall this day, though Fate forbids the fall.’

He said, and fired their heavenly breasts with  
On adverse parts the warring gods engage. [rage:  
Heaven's awful queen; and he whose azure round  
Girds the vast globe; the maid in arms renown'd;  
Hermes, of profitable arts the sire;  
And Vulcan, the black sovereign of the fire:  
These to the fleet repair with instant flight;  
The vessels tremble as the gods alight.  
In aid of Troy, Latona, Phœbus, came,  
Mars fiery-helm'd, the laughter-loving dame,  
Xanthus whose streams in golden currents flow,  
And the chaste huntress of the silver bow.

Ere yet the gods their various aid employ,  
Each Argive bosom swell'd with manly joy,  
While great Achilles (terror of the plain),  
Long lost to battle, shone in arms again.  
Dreadful he stood in front of all his host;  
Pale Troy beheld, and seem'd already lost;  
Her bravest heroes pant with inward fear,  
And trembling see another god of war. [fight,

But when the powers descending swell'd the  
Then tumult rose: fierce rage and pale affright  
Varied each face; then discord sounds alarms,  
Earth echoes, and the nations rush to arms.  
Now through the trembling shores Minerva calls,  
And now she thunders from the Grecian walls.  
Mars hovering o'er his Troy, his terror shrouds  
In gloomy tempests, and a night of clouds:  
Now through each Trojan heart he fury pours  
With voice divine, from Ilion's topmost towers;  
Now shouts to Simoës, from her beauteous hill;  
The mountain shook, the rapid stream stood still.  
Above, the sire of gods his thunder rolls,  
And peals on peals redoubled rend the poles.  
Beneath, stern Neptune shakes the solid ground;  
The forests wave, the mountains nod around;  
Through all their summits tremble Ida's woods,  
And from their sources boil her hundred floods.  
Troy's turrets totter on the rocking plain;  
And the toss'd navies beat the heaving main.  
Deep in the dismal regions of the dead,  
The' infernal monarch rear'd his horrid head,  
Leap'd from his throne, lest Neptune's arm should  
His dark dominions open to the day, [lay  
And pour in light on Pluto's drear abodes,  
Abhor'd by men, and dreadful-e'en to gods.

Such war the immortals wage; such horrors rend  
The world's vast concave, when the gods contend.  
First silver-shafted Phœbus took the plain  
Against blue Neptune, monarch of the main.  
The god of arms his giant bulk display'd,  
Opposed to Pallas, war's triumphant maid.  
Against Latona march'd the son of May.  
The quiver'd Dian, sister of the day,  
(Her golden arrows sounding at her side)  
Saturnia, majesty of heaven, defied.  
With fiery Vulcan last in battle stands  
The sacred flood that rolls on golden sands;  
Xanthus his name with those of heavenly birth,  
But call'd Scamander by the sons of earth.

While thus the gods in various league engage,  
Achilles glow'd with more than mortal rage:  
Hector he sought; in search of Hector turn'd  
His eyes around, for Hector only burn'd;  
And burst like lightning through the ranks, and  
To glut the god of battles with his blood. [vow'd  
Æneas was the first who dared to stay;  
Apollo wedged him in the warrior's way,  
But swell'd his bosom with undaunted might,  
Half-forced, and half-persuaded to the fight.  
Like young Lycaon, of the royal line,  
In voice and aspect, seem'd the power divine;  
And bade the chief reflect, how late with scorn  
In distant threats he braved the goddess born.

Then thus the hero of Anchises' strain—  
‘ To meet Pelides you persuade in vain :  
Already have I met, nor void of fear  
Observed the fury of his flying spear;  
From Ida's woods he chased us to the field,  
Our force he scatter'd, and our herds he kill'd;

Lyrnessus, Pendasus, in ashes lay;  
 But (Jove assisting) I survived the day:  
 Else had I sunk oppress'd in fatal fight  
 By fierce Achilles and Minerva's might.  
 Where'er he moved, the goddess shone before,  
 And bathed his brazen lance in hostile gore.  
 What mortal man Achilles can sustain?  
 The immortals guard him through the dreadful  
 And suffer not his dart to fall in vain. [plain,  
 Were God my aid, this arm should check his power,  
 Though strong in battle as a brazen tower.]

To whom the son of Jove—‘ That god implore,  
 And be what great Achilles was before.  
 From heavenly Venus thou derivest thy strain,  
 And he but from a sister of the main;  
 An aged seagod, father of his line;  
 But Jove himself the sacred source of thine.  
 Then lift thy weapon for a noble blow,  
 Nor fear the vaunting of a mortal foe.’

This said, and spirit breathed into his breast,  
 Through the thick troops the embolden'd hero  
 press'd;

His venturous act the white arm'd queen survey'd,  
 And thus, assembling all the powers, she said—

‘ Behold an action, gods! that claims your care,  
 Lo great Æneas rushing to the war!  
 Against Pelides he directs his course,  
 Phœbus impels, and Phœbus gives him force.  
 Restraine his bold career; at least, to attend  
 Our favour'd hero, let some power descend.  
 To guard his life, and add to his renown,  
 We, the great armament of heaven, came down.  
 Hereafter let him fall, as Fates design,  
 That spun so short his life's illustrious line:’

But lest some adverse god now cross his way,  
Give him to know what powers assist this day:  
For how shall mortal stand the dire alarms,  
When heaven's resplendent host appear in arms?

Thus she; and thus the god whose force can make  
The solid globe's eternal basis shake—  
' Against the might of man, so feeble known,  
Why should celestial powers exert their own?  
Suffice from yonder mount to view the scene,  
And leave to war the fates of mortal men.  
But if the armipotent, or god of light,  
Obstruct Achilles, or commence the fight,  
Thence on the gods of Troy we swift descend:  
Full soon, I doubt not, shall the conflict end,  
And these, in ruin and confusion hurl'd,  
Yield to our conquering arms the lower world.'

Thus having said, the tyrant of the sea,  
Cerulean Neptune, rose, and led the way.  
Advanced upon the field there stood a mound  
Of earth congested, wall'd, and trench'd around;  
In elder times to guard Alcides made,  
(The work of Trojans, with Minerva's aid)  
What time a vengeful monster of the main  
Swept the wide shore, and drove him to the plain.

Here Neptune and the gods of Greece repair,  
With clouds encompass'd, and a veil of air:  
The adverse powers, around Apollo laid,  
Crown the fair hills that silver Simoës shade.  
In circle close each heavenly party sat,  
Intent to form the future scheme of Fate;  
But mix not yet in fight, though Jove on high  
Gives the loud signal, and the heavens reply.

Meanwhile the rushing armies hide the ground;  
The trampled centre yields a hollow sound:

Steeds cased in mail, and chiefs in armour bright,  
The gleamy champaign glows with brazen light.  
Amid both hosts (a dreadful space) appear,  
There, great Achilles; bold Æneas, here.  
With towering strides Æneas first advanced;  
The nodding plumage on his helmet danced;  
Spread o'er his breast the fencing shield he bore,  
And, as he moved, his javelin flamed before.  
Not so Pelides; furious to engage,  
He rush'd impetuous. Such the lion's rage,  
Who viewing first his foes with scornful eyes,  
Though all in arms the peopled city rise,  
Stalks careless on, with unregarding pride;  
Till at the length, by some brave youth defied,  
To his bold spear the savage turns alone,  
He murmurs fury with an hollow groan;  
He grins, he foams, he rolls his eyes around;  
Lash'd by his tail his heaving sides resound;  
He calls up all his rage; he grinds his teeth,  
Resolved on vengeance, or resolved on death.  
So fierce Achilles on Æneas flies;  
So stands Æneas, and his force defies.  
Ere yet the stern encounter join'd, begun  
The seed of Thetis thus to Venus' son.

‘ Why comes Æneas through the ranks so far?  
Seeks he to meet Achilles' arm in war,  
In hope the realms of Priam to enjoy,  
And prove his merits to the throne of Troy?  
Grant that beneath thy lance Achilles dies,  
The partial monarch may refuse the prize;  
Sons he has many; those thy pride may quell:  
And 'tis his fault to love those sons too well.  
Or, in reward of thy victorious hand,  
Has Troy proposed some spacious tract of land?

An ample forest, or a fair domain,  
Of hills for vines, and arable for grain?  
E'en this, perhaps, will hardly prove thy lot;  
But can Achilles be so soon forgot?  
Once (as I think) you saw this brandish'd spear,  
And then the great *Æneas* seem'd to fear:  
With hearty haste from Ida's mount he fled,  
Nor, till he reach'd Lyrnessus, turn'd his head.  
Her lofty walls not long our progress stay'd;  
Those, Pallas, Jove, and we, in ruins laid:  
In Grecian chains her captive race were cast;  
'Tis true, the great *Æneas* fled too fast.  
Defrauded of my conquest once before,  
What then I lost, the gods this day restore.  
Go; while thou mayst, avoid the threaten'd fate;  
Fools stay to feel it, and are wise too late.'

To this Anchises' son—‘ Such words employ  
To one that fears thee, some unwarlike boy;  
Such we disdain; the best may be defied  
With mean reproaches, and unmanly pride;  
Unworthy the high race from which we came,  
Proclaim'd so loudly by the voice of fame:  
Each from illustrious fathers draws his line;  
Each goddess-born; half-human, half-divine.  
Thetis' this day, or Venus' offspring dies,  
And tears shall trickle from celestial eyes:  
For when two heroes, thus derived, contend,  
'Tis not in words the glorious strife can end.  
If yet thou further seek to learn my birth  
(A tale resounded through the spacious earth),  
Hear how the glorious origin we prove  
From ancient Dardanus, the first from Jove:  
Dardania's walls he raised; for Ilion, then,  
(The city since of many-languaged men)

Was not. The natives were content to till  
The shady foot of Ida's fountful hill.  
From Dardanus great Erichthonius springs,  
The richest, once, of Asia's wealthy kings;  
Three thousand mares his spacious pastures bred,  
Three thousand foals beside their mothers fed.  
Boreas, enamour'd of the sprightly train,  
Conceal'd his godhead in a flowing mane,  
With voice dissembled to his loves he neigh'd,  
And coursed the dappled beauties o'er the mead:  
Hence sprung twelve others of unrival'd kind,  
Swift as their mother mares, and father wind.  
These lightly skimming, when they swept the plain,  
Nor plied the grass, nor bent the tender grain;  
And when along the level seas they flew,  
Scarce on the surface curl'd the briny dew.  
Such Erichthonius was: from him there came  
The sacred Tros, of whom the Trojan name.  
Three sons renown'd adorn'd his nuptial bed,  
Hus, Assaracus, and Ganymed:  
The matchless Ganymed, divinely fair,  
Whom Heaven, enamour'd, snatch'd to upper air,  
To bear the cup of Jove (etherial guest,  
The grace and glory of the ambrosial feast).  
The two remaining sons the line divide:  
First rose Laomedon from Hus' side;  
From him Tithonus, now in cares grown old,  
And Priam, bless'd with Hector, brave and bold;  
Clytius and Lampus, everhonour'd pair;  
And Hieetaon, thunderbolt of war.  
From great Assaraens sprung Capys, he  
Begat Anchises, and Anchises me.  
Such is our race; 'tis fortune gives us birth,  
But Jove alone endues the soul with worth:

He, source of power and might! with boundless  
All human courage gives, or takes away. [sway,  
Long in the field of words we may contend,  
Reproach is infinite, and knows no end,  
Arm'd or with truth or falsehood, right or wrong;  
So volatile a weapon is the tongue;  
Wounded we wound; and neither side can fail,  
For every man has equal strength to rail:  
Women alone, when in the streets they jar,  
Perhaps excel us in this wordy war;  
Like us they stand, encompass'd with the crowd,  
And vent their anger impotent and loud.  
Cease then—Our business in the field of fight  
Is not to question, but to prove our might.  
To all those insults thou hast offer'd here,  
Receive this answer: 'tis my flying spear.'

He spoke. With all his force the javelin flung,  
Fix'd deep, and loudly in the buckler rung.  
Far on his outstretch'd arm, Pelides held  
(To meet the thundering lance) his dreadful shield,  
That trembled as it stuck; nor void of fear  
Saw, ere it fell, the' immeasurable spear.  
His fears were vain; impenetrable charms  
Secured the temper of the' ethereal arms. [held,  
Through two strong plates the point its passage  
But stopp'd, and rested, by the third repell'd.  
Five plates of various metal, various mould,  
Composed the shield; of brass each outward fold,  
Of tin each inward, and the middle gold:  
There stuck the lance. Then rising ere he threw,  
The forceful spear of great Achilles flew,  
And pierc'd the Dardan shield's extremest bound,  
Where the shrill brass return'd a sharper sound:  
Through the thin verge the Pelean weapon glides,  
And the slight covering of expanded hides.

Æneas his contracted body bends,  
And o'er him high the riven targe extends,  
Sees, through its parting plates, the upper air,  
And at his back perceives the quivering spear :  
A fate so near him, chills his soul with fright ;  
And swims before his eyes the many-colour'd light.  
Achilles, rushing in with dreadful cries,  
Draws his broad blade, and at Æneas flies :  
Æneas rousing as the foe came on,  
With force collected, heaves a mighty stone :  
A mass enormous ! which in modern days  
No two of earth's degenerate sons could raise.  
But ocean's god, whose earthquakes rock the  
ground,  
Saw the distress, and moved the powers around :  
‘ Lo ! on the brink of fate Æneas stands,  
An instant victim to Achilles' hands ;  
By Phœbus urged ; but Phœbus has bestow'd  
His aid in vain : the man o'erpowers the god.  
And can ye see this righteous chief atone  
With guiltless blood for vices not his own ?  
To all the gods his constant vows were paid ;  
Sure, though he wars for Troy, he claims our aid.  
Fate wills not this ; nor thus can Jove resign  
The future father of the Dardan line :  
The first great ancestor obtain'd his grace,  
And still his love descends on all the race :  
For Priam now, and Priam's faithless kind,  
At length are odious to the all-seeing mind ;  
On great Æneas shall devolve the reign,  
And sons succeeding sons the lasting line sustain.  
The great earth-shaker thus : to whom replies  
The imperial goddess with the radiant eyes—  
‘ Good as he is, to immolate or spare  
The Dardan prince, O Neptune, be thy care ;

Pallas and I, by all that gods can bind,  
Have sworn destruction to the Trojan kind ;  
Not e'en an instant to protract their fate,  
Or save one member of the sinking state ;  
Till her last flame be quench'd with her last gore,  
And e'en her crumbling ruins are no more.'

The king of ocean to the fight descends,  
Through all the whistling darts his course he bends,  
Swift interposed between the warriors flies,  
And casts thick darkness o'er Achilles' eyes.  
From great Æneas' shield the spear he drew,  
And at its master's feet the weapon threw.  
That done, with force divine he snatch'd on high  
The Dardan prince, and bore him through the sky,  
Smooth-gliding without step, above the heads  
Of warring heroes, and of bounding steeds :  
Till at the battle's utmost verge they light,  
Where the slow Cœancs close the rear of fight.  
The godhead there (his heavenly form confess'd)  
With words like these the panting chief address'd—

‘ What power, O prince, with force inferior far,  
Urged thee to meet Achilles' arm in war ?  
Henceforth beware, nor antedate thy doom,  
Defrauding Fate of all thy fame to come.  
But when the day decreed (for come it must)  
Shall lay this dreadful hero in the dust,  
Let then the furies of that arm be known,  
Secure no Grecian force transcends thy own.’

With that, he left him wondering as he lay,  
Then from Achilles chased the mist away :  
Sudden, returning with the stream of light,  
The scene of war came rushing on his sight. [mind !  
Then thus, amazed—‘ What wonders strike my  
My spear, that parted on the wings of wind,

Laid here before me! and the Dardan lord,  
That fell this instant, vanish'd from my sword!  
I thought alone with mortals to contend,  
But powers celestial sure this foe defend.  
Great as he is, our arm he scarce will try,  
Content for once, with all his gods, to fly.  
Now then let others bleed.' This said, aloud  
He vents his fury, and inflames the crowd:  
' O Greeks (he cries, and every rank alarms),  
Join battle, man to man, and arms to arms!  
'Tis not in me, though favour'd by the sky,  
To mow whole troops, and make whole armies fly:  
No god can singly such a host engage,  
Not Mars himself, nor great Minerva's rage.  
But whatsoe'er Achilles can inspire,  
Whate'er of active force, or acting fire;  
Whate'er this heart can prompt, or hand obey;  
All, all Achilles, Greeks! is yours to-day.  
Through yon wide host this arm shall scatter fear,  
And thin the squadrons with my single spear.'

He said: nor less elate with martial joy,  
The godlike Hector warm'd the troops of Troy:  
' Trojans, to war! Think Hector leads you on;  
Nor dread the vaunts of Peleus' haughty son.  
Deeds must decide our fate. E'en those with words  
Insult the brave, who tremble at their swords:  
The weakest atheist-wretch all heaven defies,  
But shrinks and shudders when the thunder flies.  
Nor from yon boaster shall your chief retire,  
Not though his heart were steel, his hands were  
fire;  
That fire, that steel, your Hector should withstand,  
And brave that vengeful heart, that dreadful hand.'

Thus (breathing rage through all) the hero said;  
A wood of lances rises round his head,

Clamours on clamours tempest all the air,  
They join, they throng, they thicken to the war.  
But Phœbus warns him from high heaven to shun  
The single fight with Thetis' godlike son ;  
More safe to combat in the mingled band,  
Nor tempt too near the terrors of his hand.  
He hears, obedient to the god of light,  
And, plunged within the ranks, awaits the fight.

Then fierce Achilles, shouting to the skies,  
On Troy's whole force with boundless fury flies.  
First falls Iphytion, at his army's head ;  
Brave was the chief, and brave the host he led ;  
From great Otrynteus he derived his blood,  
His mother was a Naïs of the flood ;  
Beneath the shades of Tmolus, crown'd with snow,  
From Hydè's walls he ruled the lands below.  
Fierce as he springs, the sword his head divides :  
The parted visage falls on equal sides :  
With loud-resounding arms he strikes the plain ;  
While thus Achilles glories o'er the slain —

‘ Lie there, Otryntides ! the Trojan earth  
Receives thee dead, though Gygæ boast thy birth ;  
Those beauteous fields where Hyllus' waves are  
roll'd,

And plenteous Hermus swells with tides of gold,  
Are thine no more ? — The’ insulting hero said,  
And left him sleeping in eternal shade.  
The rolling wheels of Greece the body tore,  
And dash'd their axles with no vulgar gore.

Demoleon next, Antenor's offspring, laid  
Breathless in dust, the price of rashness paid.  
The’ impatient steel with full-descending sway  
Forced through his brazen helm its furious way,  
Resistless drove the batter'd skull before,  
And dash'd and mingled all the brains with gore.

This sees Hippodamas, and, seized with fright,  
Deserts his chariot for a swifter flight :  
The lance arrests him : an ignoble wound  
The panting Trojan rivets to the ground.  
He groans away his soul : not louder roars,  
At Neptune's shrine on Helicè's high shores,  
The victim bull ; the rocks re-bellow round,  
And ocean listens to the grateful sound.

Then fell on Polydore his vengeful rage,  
The youngest hope of Priam's stooping age  
(Whose feet for swiftness in the race surpass'd) ;  
Of all his sons, the dearest, and the last.  
To the forbidden field he takes his flight,  
In the first folly of a youthful knight,  
To vaunt his swiftness wheels around the plain,  
But vaunts not long, with all his swiftness slain :  
Struck where the crossing belts unite behind,  
And golden rings the double back-plate join'd,  
Forth through the navel burst the thrilling steel ;  
And on his knees with piercing shrieks he fell ;  
The rushing entrails, pour'd upon the ground,  
His hands collect ; and darkness wraps him round.  
When Hector view'd, all ghastly in his gore,  
Thus sadly slain the unhappy Polydore,  
A cloud of sorrow overcast his sight,  
His soul no longer brook'd the distant fight :  
Full in Achilles' dreadful front he came,  
And shook his javelin like a waving flame.  
The son of Peleus sees, with joy possess'd,  
His heart high-bounding in his rising breast :  
' And, lo ! the man, on whom black fates attend ;  
The man, that slew Achilles, in his friend !  
No more shall Hector's and Pelides' spear  
Turn from each other in the walks of war' —

Then with revengeful eyes he scann'd him o'er :  
' Come, and receive thy fate ! ' He spake no more.

Hector, undaunted, thus—' Such words employ  
To one that dreads thee, some unwarlike boy :  
Such we could give, defying and defied,  
Mean intercourse of obloquy and pride !  
I know thy force to mine superior far ;  
But Heaven alone confers success in war :  
Mean as I am, the gods may guide my dart,  
And give it entrance in a braver heart.'

Then parts the lance : but Pallas' heavenly breath  
Far from Achilles wafts the winged death :  
The bidden dart again to Hector flies,  
And at the feet of its great master lies.  
Achilles closes with his hated foe,  
His heart and eyes with flaming fury glow :  
But present to his aid, Apollo shrouds  
The favour'd hero in a veil of clouds.  
Thrice struck Pelides with indignant heart,  
Thrice in impassive air he plunged the dart ;  
The spear a fourth time buried in the cloud,  
He foams with fury, and exclaims aloud—

‘ Wretch ! thou hast scaped again, once more  
thy flight  
Has saved thee, and the partial god of light.  
But long thou shalt not thy just fate withstand,  
If any power assist Achilles' hand.  
Fly then inglorious ! but thy flight this day  
Whole hecatombs of Trojan ghosts shall pay.’

With that, he gluts his rage on numbers slain :  
Then Dryops tumbled to the' ensanguined plain,  
Pierced through the neck : he left him panting there,  
And stopp'd Demuchus, great Philetor's heir,  
Gigantic chief ! deep gash'd the' enormous blade,  
And for the soul an ample passage made.

Laogonus and Dardanus expire,  
The valiant sons of an unhappy sire ;  
Both in one instant from the chariot hurl'd,  
Sunk in one instant to the nether world :  
This difference only their sad fates afford,  
That one the spear destroy'd, and one the sword,

Nor less unpitied, young Alastor bleeds ;  
In vain his youth, in vain his beauty pleads :  
In vain he begs thee, with a suppliant's moan,  
To spare a form, an age so like thy own !  
Unhappy boy ! no prayer, no moving art,  
E'er bent that fierce, inexorable heart !  
While yet he trembled at his knees, and cried,  
The ruthless falchion oped his tender side ;  
The panting liver pours a flood of gore  
That drowns his bosom till he pants no more.

Through Milius' head then drove the impetuous spear ;  
The warrior falls, transfix'd from ear to ear.  
Thy life, Echeclus ! next the sword bereaves,  
Deep through the front the ponderous falchion cleaves ;  
Warm'd in the brain the smoking weapon lies,  
The purple death comes floating o'er his eyes.  
Then brave Deucalion died : the dart was flung  
Where the knit nerves the pliant elbow strung ;  
He dropp'd his arm, an unassisting weight,  
And stood all impotent, expecting fate :  
Full on his neck the falling falchion sped,  
From his broad shoulders hew'd his crested head :  
Forth from the bone the spinal marrow flies,  
And, sunk in dust, the corpse extended lies.  
Rhigmus, whose race from fruitful Thracia came  
(The son of Pireus, an illustrious name),

Succeeds to fate: the spear his belly rends;  
Prone from his car the thundering chief descends.  
The squire, who saw expiring on the ground  
His prostrate master, rein'd the steeds around:  
His back, scarce turn'd, the Pelian javelin gored,  
And stretch'd the servant o'er his dying lord.  
As when a flame the winding valley fills,  
And runs on crackling shrubs between the hills;  
Then o'er the stubble up the mountain flies,  
Fires the high woods, and blazes to the skies,  
This way, and that, the spreading torrent roars;  
So sweeps the hero through the wasted shores:  
Around him wide, immense destruction pours,  
And earth is deluged with the sanguine showers.  
As with autumnal harvests cover'd o'er,  
And thick bestrown, lies Ceres' sacred floor;  
When round and round, with never-wearied pain,  
The trampling steers beat out the unnumber'd  
So the fierce coursers, as the chariot rolls, [grain;  
Tread down whole ranks, and crush out heroes'  
souls. [fly,

Dash'd from their hoofs while o'er the dead they  
Black, bloody drops the smoking chariot dye:  
The spiky wheels through heaps of carnage tore;  
And thick the groaning axles dropp'd with gore.  
High o'er the scene of death Achilles stood.  
All grim with dust, all horrible in blood:  
Yet still insatiate, still with rage on flame;  
Such is the lust of never-dying fame!

## BOOK XXI.

## The Argument.

## THE BATTLE IN THE RIVER SCAMANDER.

The Trojans fly before Achilles, some towards the town, others to the river Scamander: he falls upon the latter with great slaughter; takes twelve captives alive, to sacrifice to the shade of Patroclus; and kills Lycaon and Asteropeus. Scamander attacks him with all his waves: Neptune and Pallas assist the hero: Simois joins Scamander: at length Vulcan, by the instigation of Juno, almost dries up the river. This combat ended, the other gods engage each other. Meanwhile Achilles continues the slaughter, and drives the rest into Troy: Agenor only makes a stand, and is conveyed away in a cloud by Apollo; who (to delude Achilles) takes upon him Agenor's shape, and while he pursues him in that disguise, gives the Trojans an opportunity of retiring into their city.

The same day continues. The scene is on the banks and in the stream of Scamander.

AND now to Xanthus' gliding stream they drove,  
Xanthus, immortal progeny of Jove.  
The river here divides the flying train.  
Part to the town fly diverse o'er the plain,  
Where late their troops triumphant bore the fight,  
Now chased, and trembling in ignoble flight  
(These with a gather'd mist Saturnia shrouds,  
And rolls behind the rout a heap of clouds):  
Part plunge into the stream: old Xanthus roars,  
The flashing billows beat the whiten'd shores:

With cries promiscuous all the banks resound,  
And here, and there, in eddies whirling round,  
The flouncing steeds and shrieking warriors  
drown'd.

As the scorch'd locusts from their fields retire,  
While fast behind them runs the blaze of fire ;  
Driven from the land before the smoky cloud,  
The clustering legions rush into the flood ;  
So plung'd in Xanthus by Achilles' force,  
Roars the resounding surge with men and horse.  
His bloody lance the hero cast aside  
(Which spreading tamarisks on the margin hide) ;  
Then, like a god, the rapid billows braves,  
Arm'd with his sword, high-brandish'd o'er the  
waves :

Now down he plunges, now he whirls it round,  
Deep groan'd the waters with the dying sound ;  
Repeated wounds the reddening river dyed,  
And the warm purple circled on the tide.  
Swift through the foamy flood the Trojans fly,  
And close in rocks or winding caverns lie :  
So the huge dolphin tempesting the main,  
In shoals before him fly the scaly train,  
Confusedly heap'd they seek their inmost caves,  
Or pant and heave beneath the floating waves.  
Now, tired with slaughter, from the Trojan band  
Twelve chosen youths he drags alive to land ;  
With their rich belts their captive arms constrains  
(Late their proud ornaments, but now their chains).  
These his attendants to the ships convey'd,  
Sad victims destined to Patroclus' shade !

Then, as once more he plunged amid the flood,  
The young Lycaon in his passage stood ;  
The son of Priam ; whom the hero's hand  
But late made captive in his father's land,

(As from a sycamore his sounding steel  
Lopp'd the green arms to spoke a chariot-wheel);  
To Lemnos' isle he sold the royal slave,  
Where Jason's son the price demanded gave;  
But kind Eëtion, touching on the shore,  
The ransom'd prince to fair Arisbè bore.  
Ten days were pass'd, since in his father's reign  
He felt the sweets of liberty again;  
The next, that god whom men in vain withstand  
Gives the same youth to the same conquering  
Now never to return! and doom'd to go [hand;  
A sadder journey to the shades below.  
His well-known face when great Achiiles eyed  
(The helm and visor he had cast aside  
With wild affright, and dropp'd upon the field  
His useless lance and unavailing shield),  
As trembling, panting, from the stream he fled,  
And knock'd his faltering knees, the hero said—  
‘Ye mighty gods! what wonders strike my view!  
Is it in vain our conquering arms subdue?  
Sure I shall see yon heaps of Trojans kill'd  
Rise from the shades, and brave me on the field:  
As now the captive, whom so late I bound  
And sold to Lemnos, stalks on Trojan ground!  
Not him the sea's unmeasured deeps detain,  
That bar such numbers from their native plain:  
Lo! he returns. Try, then, my flying spear!  
Try, if the grave can hold the wanderer;  
If earth at length this active prince can seize,  
Earth, whose strong grasp has held down Hercules.’

Thus while he spoke, the Trojan pale with fears  
Approach'd, and sought his knees with suppliant  
tears;

Loath as he was to yield his youthful breath,  
And his soul shivering at the' approach of death.  
Achilles raised the spear, prepared to wound ;  
He kiss'd his feet, extended on the ground :  
And while, above, the spear suspended stood,  
Longing to dip its thirsty point in blood, [dart,  
One hand embrac'd them close, one stopp'd the  
While thus these melting words attempt his  
heart—

‘ Thy well-known captive, great Achilles ! see,  
Once more Lycaon trembles at thy knee.  
Some pity to a suppliant's name afford,  
Who shared the gifts of Ceres at thy board ;  
Whom late thy conquering arm to Lemnos bore,  
Far from his father, friends, and native shore ;  
A hundred oxen were his price that day,  
Now sums immense thy mercy shall repay.  
Scarce respite from woes I yet appear, [here ;  
And scarce twelve morning suns have seen me  
Lo ! Jove again submits me to thy hands,  
Again, her victim cruel Fate demands !  
I sprung from Priam, and Laothoe fair,  
(Old Altè's daughter, and Lelegia's heir ;  
Who held in Pedasus his famed abode,  
And ruled the fields where silver Satnio flow'd)  
Two sons (alas ! unhappy sons) she bore ;  
For ah ! one spear shall drink each brother's gore,  
And I succeed to slaughter'd Polydore.  
How from that arm of terror shall I fly ?  
Some demon urges ! 'tis my doom to die !  
If ever yet soft pity touch'd thy mind,  
Ah ! think not me too much of Hector's kind !  
Not the same mother gave thy suppliant breath,  
With his, who wrought thy loved Patroclus' death.’

These words, attended with a shower of tears,  
The youth address'd to unrelenting ears :  
' Talk not of life, or ransom (he replies),  
Patroclus dead, whoever meets me, dies :  
In vain a single Trojan sues for grace ;  
But least, the sons of Priam's hateful race.  
Die then, my friend ! what boots it to deplore ?  
The great, the good Patroclus is no more !  
He, far thy better, was foredoom'd to die,  
And thou, dost thou bewail mortality ?  
Seest thou not me, whom Nature's gifts adorn,  
Sprung from a hero, from a goddess born ;  
The day shall come (which nothing can avert)  
When by the spear, the arrow, or the dart,  
By night, or day, by force, or by design,  
Impending death and certain fate are mine !  
Die then'—he said ; and as the word he spoke  
The fainting stripling sunk before the stroke :  
His hand forgot its grasp, and left the spear,  
While all his trembling frame confess'd his fear :  
Sudden, Achilles his broad sword display'd,  
And buried in his neck the reeking blade.  
Prone fell the youth ; and panting on the land,  
The gushing purple dyed the thirsty sand.  
The victor to the stream the carcass gave,  
And thus insults him, floating on the wave—

' Lie there, Lycaon ! let the fish surround  
Thy bloated corpse, and suck thy gory wound :  
There no sad mother shall thy funerals weep,  
But swift Seamber roll thee to the deep,  
Whose every wave some watery monster brings,  
To feast unpunish'd on the fat of kings.  
So perish Troy, and all the Trojan line !  
Such ruin theirs, and such compassion mine.

What boots ye now Seamander's worship'd stream,  
His earthly honours, and immortal name ?  
In vain your immolated bulls are slain,  
Your living coursers glut his gulfs in vain !  
Thus he rewards you, with this bitter fate ;  
Thus, till the Greeian vengeance is complete :  
Thus is atoned Patroclus' honour'd shade,  
And the short absence of Achilles paid.'

These beastful words provoked the raging god ;  
With fury swells the violated flood.  
What means divine may yet the power employ  
To check Achilles, and to rescue Troy ?  
Meanwhile the hero springs in arms to dare  
The great Asteropeus to mortal war ;  
The son of Pelagon, whose lofty line  
Flows from the source of Axius, stream divine !  
(Fair Peribaea's love the god had crown'd,  
With all his refluent waters circled round)  
On him Achilles rush'd : he fearless stood,  
And shook too spears, advancing from the flood ;  
The flood impell'd him, on Pelides' head  
To avenge his waters choked with heaps of dead.  
Near as they drew, Achilles thus began—

‘ What art thou, boldest of the race of man ?  
Who, or from whence ? Unhappy is the sire  
Whose son encounters our resistless ire.’

‘ O son of Peleus ! what avails to trace  
(Replied the warrior) our illustrious race ?  
From rich Paeonia's valleys I command,  
Arm'd with pretended spears, my native band ;  
Now shines the tenth bright morning since I came  
In aid of Ilion to the fields of fame :  
Axius, who swells with all the neighbouring rills,  
And wide around the floated region fills,

Begot my sire, whose spear much glory won :  
Now lift thy arm, and try that hero's son !'

Threatening he said : the hostile chiefs advance ;

At once Asteropeus discharged each lance,  
(For both his dexterous hands the lance could  
wield)

One struck, but pierc'd not, the Vulcanian shield ;  
One rased Achilles' hand : the spouting blood  
Spun forth ; in earth the fasten'd weapon stood.  
Like lightning next the Pelian javelin flies :  
Its erring fury hiss'd along the skies ;  
Deep in the swelling bank was driven the spear,  
E'en to the middle earth'd ; and quiver'd there.  
Then from his side the sword Pelides drew,  
And on his foe with doubled fury flew.

The foe thrice tugg'd, and shook the rooted wood ;  
Repulsive of his might the weapon stood :  
The fourth, he tries to break the spear, in vain ;  
Bent as he stands, he tumbles to the plain ;  
His belly open'd with a ghastly wound,  
The reeking entrails pour upon the ground.  
Beneath the hero's feet he panting lies,  
And his eye darkens, and his spirit flies :  
While the proud victor thus triumphing said,  
His radiant armour tearing from the dead —

‘ So ends thy glory ! Such the fate they prove  
Who strive presumptuous with the sons of Jove !  
Sprung from a river, didst thou boast thy line ?  
But great Saturnius is the source of mine.  
How durst thou vaunt thy watery progeny ?  
Of Peleus, Eacus, and Jove, am I ;  
The race of these superior far to those,  
As he that thunders to the stream that flows.

What rivers can, Seamander might have shown ;  
But Jove he dreads, nor wars against his son.  
E'en Achelöns might contend in vain,  
And all the roaring billows of the main.  
The' eternal ocean, from whose fountains flow  
The seas, the rivers, and the springs below,  
The thundering voice of Jove abhors to hear,  
And in his deep abysses shakes with fear.'

He said ; then from the bank his javelin tore,  
And left the breathless warrior in his gore.  
The floating tides the bloody carcass lave,  
And beat against it, wave succeeding wave ;  
Till, roll'd between the banks, it lies the food  
Of curling eels, and fishes of the flood. [slain]  
All scatter'd round the stream (their mightiest  
The amaz'd Paeonians scour along the plain :  
He vents his fury on the flying crew,  
Thrasius, Astypylus, and Mnesus slew ;  
Mydon, Thersilechus, with Ænus, fell ;  
And numbers more his lance had plunged to hell ;  
But from the bottom of his gulfs profound  
Seamander spoke ; the shores return'd the sound :

‘ O first of mortals ! (for the gods are thine)  
In valour matchless, and in force divine !  
If Jove have given thee every Trojan head,  
’Tis not on me thy rage should heap the dead.  
See ! my choked streams no more their course can  
Nor roll their wonted tribute to the deep. [keep,  
Turn then, impetuous ! from our injured flood ;  
Content, thy slaughterers could amaze a god.’

In human form, confess'd before his eyes,  
The river thus ; and thus the chief replies—  
‘ O sacred stream ! thy word we shall obey ;  
But not till Troy the destined vengeance pay,

Not till within her towers the perjured train  
Shall pant, and tremble at our arms again ;  
Not till proud Hector, guardian of her wall,  
Or stain this lance, or see Achilles fall.'

He said ; and drove with fury on the foe.  
Then to the godhead of the silver bow  
The yellow flood began—‘ O son of Jove !  
Was not the mandate of the sire above  
Full and express, that Phœbus should employ  
His sacred arrows in defence of Troy,  
And make her conquer till Hyperion’s fall  
In awful darkness hide the face of all ?

He spoke in vain—the chief without dismay  
Ploughs through the boiling surge his desperate  
Then rising in his rage above the shores, [way.  
From all his deep the bellowing river roars,  
Huge heaps of slain disgorges on the coast,  
And round the banks the ghastly dead are toss’d.  
While all before, the billows ranged on high,  
(A watery bulwark) skreen the bands who fly.  
Now bursting on his head with thundering sound,  
The falling deluge whelms the hero round :  
His loaded shield bends to the rushing tide ;  
His feet, upborne, scarce the strong flood divide,  
Sliddering and staggering. On the border stood  
A spreading elm, that overhung the flood ;  
He seized a bending bough, his steps to stay ;  
The plant uprooted to his weight gave way,  
Heaving the bank, and undermining all ;  
Loud flash the waters to the rushing fall  
Of the thick foliage. The large trunk display’d  
Bridged the rough flood across : the hero stay’d  
On this his weight, and, raised upon his hand,  
Leap’d from the channel, and regain’d the land.

Then blacken'd the wild waves ; the murmur rose ;  
The god pursues, a huger billow throws,  
And bursts the bank, ambitious to destroy  
The man whose fury is the fate of Troy.  
He, like the warlike eagle, speeds his pace  
(Swiftest and strongest of the aërial race) ;  
Far as a spear can fly, Achilles springs  
At every bound ; his clanging armour rings ;  
Now here, now there, he turns on every side,  
And winds his course before the following tide ;  
The waves flow after, wheresoe'er he wheels,  
And gather fast, and murmur at his heels.  
So when a peasant to his garden brings  
Soft rills of water from the bubbling springs,  
And calls the floods from high, to bless his bowers,  
And feed with pregnant streams the plants and  
flowers ;  
Soon as he clears whate'er their passage stay'd,  
And marks the future current with his spade,  
Swift o'er the rolling pebbles, down the hills,  
Louder and louder purl the falling rills ;  
Before him scattering, they prevent his pains,  
And shine in mazy wanderings o'er the plains.  
Still flies Achilles, but before his eyes  
Still swift Scamander rolls where'er he flies :  
Not all his speed escapes the rapid floods ;  
The first of men, but not a match for gods.  
Oft as he turn'd the torrent to oppose,  
And bravely try if all the powers were foes ;  
So oft the surge, in watery mountains spread,  
Beats upon his back, or bursts upon his head.  
Yet dauntless still the adverse flood he braves,  
And still indignant bounds above the waves.  
Tired by the tides, his knees relax with toil ;  
Wash'd from beneath him slides the slimy soil ;

When thus (his eyes on heaven's expansion  
thrown)

Forth bursts the hero with an angry groan—

‘ Is there no god Achilles to befriend,  
No power to avert his miserable end?  
Prevent, O Jove! this ignominious date,  
And make my future life the sport of Fate.

Of all Heaven's oracles believed in vain,  
But most of Thetis, must her son complain;  
By Phœbus' darts she prophesied my fall,  
In glorious arms before the Trojan wall.  
Oh! had I died in fields of battle warm,  
Stretch'd like a hero, by a hero's arm!

Might Hector's spear this dauntless bosom rend,  
And my swift soul o'ertake my slaughter'd friend!  
Ah no! Achilles meets a shameful fate,  
Oh how unworthy of the brave and great!  
Like some vile swain, whom on a rainy day,  
Crossing a ford, the torrent sweeps away,  
An unregarded carcass to the sea.’

Neptune and Pallas haste to his relief,  
And thus in human form address'd the chief;  
‘ The power of ocean first—‘ Forbear thy fear,  
O son of Peleus! Lo, thy gods appear.  
Behold! from Jove descending to thy aid,  
Propitious Neptune, and the blue-eyed maid.  
Stay, and the furious flood shall cease to rave:  
‘ Tis not thy fate to glut his angry wave.  
But thou, the counsel Heaven suggests, attend!  
Nor breathe from combat, nor thy sword suspend,  
Till Troy receive her flying sons, till all  
Her routed squadrons pant behind her wall:  
Hector alone shall stand his fatal chance,  
And Hector's blood shall smoke upon thy lance.

Thine is the glory doom'd.' Thus spake the gods :  
Then swift ascended to the bright abodes.

Stung with new ardour, thus by Heaven impell'd,  
He springs impetuous, and invades the field :  
O'er all the' expanded plain the waters spread ;  
Heaved on the bounding billows danced the dead,  
Floating midst scatter'd arms, while casques of  
gold

And turn'd-up bucklers glitter'd as they roll'd.  
High o'er the surging tide, by leaps and bounds,  
He wades, and mounts ; the parted wave resounds.  
Not a whole river stops the hero's course,  
While Pallas fills him with immortal force.  
With equal rage indignant Xanthus roars,  
And lifts his billows, and o'erwhelms his shores.

Then thus to Simois—' Haste, my brother flood !  
And check this mortal that controls a god :  
Our bravest heroes else shall quit the fight,  
And Ilion tumble from her towery height.  
Call then thy subject streams, and bid them roar,  
From all thy fountains swell thy watery store,  
With broken rocks, and with a load of dead,  
Charge the black surge, and pour it on his head.  
Mark how resistless through the flood he goes,  
And boldly bids the warring gods be foes !  
But nor that force, nor form divine to sight,  
Shall aught avail him, if our rage unite :  
Whelm'd under our dark gulfs those arms shall lie  
That blaze so dreadful in each Trojan eye ;  
And deep beneath a sandy mountain hurl'd,  
Immersed remain this terror of the world.  
Such ponderous ruin shall confound the place,  
No Greeks shall e'er his perish'd relies grace,  
No hand his bones shall gather, or inhume ;  
These his cold rites, and this his watery tomb.'

He said ; and on the chief descends amain,  
Increased with gore, and swelling with the slain.  
Then murmuring from his beds, he boils, he raves,  
And a foam whitens on the purple waves :  
At every step, before Achilles stood  
The crimson surge, and deluged him with blood.  
Fear touch'd the queen of heaven : she saw dis-  
may'd,

She call'd aloud, and summon'd Vulcan's aid.

‘ Rise to the war ! the’ insulting flood requires  
Thy wasteful arm ! assemble all thy fires !  
While to their aid, by our command enjoin'd,  
Rush the swift eastern and the western wind :  
These from old ocean at my word shall blow,  
Pour the red torrent on the watery foe,  
Corpses and arms to one bright ruin turn,  
And hissing rivers to their bottoms burn.  
Go, mighty in thy rage ! display thy power,  
Drink the whole flood, the crackling trees devour,  
Scorch all the banks ! and (till our voice reclaim)  
Exert the’ unwearyed furies of the flame !’

The power ignipotent her word obeys :  
Wide o'er the plain he pours the boundless blaze ;  
At once consumes the dead, and dries the soil :  
And the shrunk waters in their channel boil.  
As when autumnal Boreas sweeps the sky,  
And instant blows the water'd gardens dry ;  
So look'd the field, so whit'en'd was the ground,  
While Vulcan breathed the fiery blast around.  
Swift on the sedgy reeds the ruin preys ;  
Along the margin winds the running blaze :  
The trees in flaming rows to ashes turn,  
The flowery lotos, and the tamarisk burn,  
Broad elm, and cypress rising in a spire ;  
The watery willows hiss before the fire.

Now glow the waves, the fishes pant for breath,  
The eels lie twisting in the pangs of death :  
Now flounce aloft, now dive the scaly fry,  
Or, gasping, turn their bellies to the sky.  
At length the river rear'd his languid head,  
And thus, short-panting, to the god he said—

‘ Oh Vulcan ! oh ! what power resists thy might ?  
I faint, I sink, unequal to the fight—  
I yield—Let Ilion fall ; if Fate decree—  
Ah—bend no more thy fiery arms on me !’

He ceased ; wide conflagration blazing round ;  
The bubbling waters yield a hissing sound,  
As when the flames beneath a caldron rise,  
To melt the fat of some rich sacrifice,  
Amid the fierce embrace of circling fires  
The waters foam, the heavy smoke aspires :  
So boils the’imprison’d flood, forbid to flow,  
And choked with vapours, feels his bottom glow.  
To Juno then, imperial queen of air,  
The burning river sends his earnest prayer :

‘ Ah why, Saturnia ! must thy son engage  
Me, only me, with all his wasteful rage ?  
On other gods his dreadful arm employ,  
For mightier gods assert the cause of Troy.  
Submissive I desist, if thou command ;  
But ah ! withdraw this all-destroying hand.  
Hear then my solemn oath, to yield to Fate  
Unaided Ilion, and her destined state,  
Till Greece shall gird her with destructive flame,  
And in one ruin sink the Trojan name.’

His warm entreaty touch’d Saturnia’s ear :  
She bade the’ ignipotent his rage forbear,  
Recall the flame, nor in a mortal cause  
Infest a god : the’ obedient flame withdraws :

Again, the branching streams begin to spread,  
And soft remurmur in their wonted bed.

While these by Juno's will the strife resign,  
The warring gods in fierce contention join :  
Rekindling rage each heavenly breast alarms :  
With horrid clangour shock the' ethereal arms :  
Heaven in loud thunder bids the trumpet sound ;  
And wide beneath them groans the rending ground.  
Jove, as his sport, the dreadful scene descries,  
And views contending gods with careless eyes.  
The power of battles lifts his brazen spear,  
And first assaults the radiant queen of war :

‘ What moved thy madness, thus to disunite  
Ethereal minds, and mix all Heaven in fight ?  
What wonder this, when in thy frantie mood  
Thou drovest a mortal to insult a god ?  
Thy impious hand Tydides' javelin bore,  
And madly bathed it in celestial gore.’ [shield,

He spoke, and smote the long-resounding  
Which bears Jove's thunder on its dreadful field ;  
The adamantine ægis of her sire,  
That turns the glancing bolt and forked fire.

Then beaved the goddess in her mighty hand  
A stone, the limit of the neighbouring land,  
There fix'd from eldest times ; black, craggy, vast :  
This at the heavenly homicide she cast.  
Thundering he falls, a mass of monstrous size :  
And seven broad acres covers as he lies.  
The stunning stroke his stubborn nerves unbound :  
Loud o'er the fields his ringing arms resound :  
The scornful dame her conquest views with smiles,  
And, glorying, thus the prostrate god reviles :

‘ Hast thou not yet, insatiate fury ! known  
How far Minerva's force transcends thy own ?

Juno, whom thou rebellious darest withstand,  
Corrects thy folly thus by Pallas' hand;  
Thus meets thy broken faith with just disgrace,  
And partial aid to Troy's perfidious race.'

The goddess spoke, and turn'd her eyes away,  
That, beaming round, diffused celestial day.  
Jove's Cyprian daughter, stooping on the land,  
Lent to the wounded god her tender hand :  
Slowly he rises, scarcely breathes with pain,  
And, propp'd on her fair arm, forsakes the plain.  
This the bright empress of the heavens survey'd,  
And, scoffing, thus to war's victorious maid—

‘ Lo! what an aid on Mars's side is seen!  
The smiles' and loves' unconquerable queen!  
Mark with what insolence, in open view,  
She moves : let Pallas, if she dares, pursue.’

Minerva smiling heard, the pair o'ertook,  
And slightly on her breast the wanton strook :  
She, unresisting, fell (her spirits fled);  
On earth together lay the lovers spread.  
‘ And like these heroes, be the fate of all  
(Minerva cries) who guard the Trojan wall !  
To Grecian gods such let the Phrygian be,  
So dread, so fierce, as Venus is to me ;  
Then from the lowest stone shall Troy be moved’—  
Thus she, and Juno with a smile approved.

Meantime, to mix in more than mortal fight,  
The god of ocean dares the god of light.  
‘ What sloth has seized us, when the fields around  
Ring with conflicting powers, and heaven re-  
turns the sound ?

Shall, ignominious, we with shame retire,  
No deed perform'd, to our Olympian sire ?

Come, prove thy arm ! for first the war to wage,  
Suits not my greatness, or superior age :  
Rash as thou art to prop the Trojan throne,  
(Forgetful of my wrongs and of thy own)  
And guard the race of prond Laomedon !  
Hast thou forgot, how, at the monarch's prayer,  
We shared the lengthen'd labours of a year ?  
Troy's wall I raised (for such were Jove's com-  
mands),

Andyon proud bulwarks grew beneath my hands :  
Thy task it was to feed the bellowing droves  
Along fair Ida's vales, and pendent groves.  
But when the circling seasons in their train [pain,  
Brought back the grateful day that crown'd our  
With menace stern the fraudulent king defied  
Our latent godhead, and the prize denied :  
Mad as he was, he threaten'd servile bands,  
And doom'd us exiles far in barbarous lands.  
Incensed, we heavenward fled with swiftest wing,  
And destined vengeance on the perjured king.  
Dost thou, for this, afford proud Ilion grace,  
And not, like us, infest the faithless race ;  
Like us, their present, future sons destroy,  
And from its deep foundations heave their Troy ?

Apollo thus—‘ To combat for mankind  
Ill suits the wisdom of celestial mind :  
For what is man ? Calamitous by birth,  
They owe their life and nourishment to earth ;  
Like yearly leaves, that now, with beauty crown'd,  
Smile on the sun ; now, wither on the ground.  
To their own hands commit the frantic scene,  
Nor mix immortals in a cause so mean.’

Then turns his face, far beaming heavenly fires,  
And from the senior power submiss retires :

Him, thus retreating, Artemis upbraids,  
The quiver'd huntress of the silvan shades:

‘ And is it thus the youthful Phœbus flies,  
And yields to ocean's hoary sire the prize?  
How vain that martial pomp, and dreadful show  
Of pointed arrows, and the silver bow!  
Now boast no more in yon celestial bower,  
Thy force can match the great earth-shaking  
power.’

Silent, he heard the queen of woods upbraid:  
Not so **Saturnia** bore the vaunting maid;  
But furions thus—‘ What insolence has driven  
Thy pride to face the majesty of heaven?  
What though by Jove the female plague design'd,  
Fierce to the feeble race of womankind,  
The wretched matron feels thy piercing dart;  
Thy sex's tyrant, with a tiger's heart?  
What though tremendous in the woodland chase,  
Thy certain arrows pierce the savage race?  
How dares thy rashness on the powers divine  
Employ those arms, or match thy force with mine?  
Learn hence no more unequal war to wage—’  
She said, and seized her wrists with eager rage;  
These in her left hand locked, her right untied  
The bow, the quiver, and its plumy pride.  
About her temples flies the busy bow;  
Now here, now there, she winds her from the  
blow;  
The scattering arrows, rattling from the case,  
Drop round, and idly mark the dusty place.  
Swift from the field the baffled huntress flies,  
And scarce restrains the torrent in her eyes:  
So, when the falcon wings her way above,  
To the cleft cavern speeds the gentle dove;

(Not fated yet to die) there safe retreats,  
Yet still her heart against the marble beats.

To her Latona hastes with tender care ;  
Whom Hermes viewing, thus declines the war—  
' How shall I face the dame who gives delight  
To him whose thunders blacken heaven with night ?  
Go, matchless goddess ! triumph in the skies,  
And boast my conquest, while I yield the prize.'

He spoke ; and pass'd : Latona, stooping low,  
Collects the scatter'd shafts and fallen bow,  
That, glittering on the dust, lay here and there ;  
Dishonour'd relics of Diana's war :  
Then swift pursued her to her bless'd abode,  
Where, all confused, she sought the sovereign god ;  
Weeping she grasp'd his knees : the ambrosial vest  
Shook with her sighs, and panted on her breast.

The sire superior smiled, and bade her show  
What heavenly hand had caused his daughter's  
woe ?

Abash'd, she names his own imperial spouse ;  
And the pale crescent fades upon her brows.

Thus they above ; while, swiftly gliding down,  
Apollo enters Ilion's sacred town ;  
The guardian god now trembled for her wall,  
And fear'd the Greeks, though Fate forbad her fall.  
Back to Olympus, from the war's alarms,  
Return the shining bands of gods in arms ;  
Some proud in triumph, some with rage on fire ;  
And take their thrones around the' ethereal sire.

Through blood, through death, Achilles still  
proceeds,  
O'er slaughter'd heroes, and o'er rolling steeds.  
As when avenging flames with fury driven,  
On guilty towns exert the wrath of Heaven ;

The pale inhabitants, some fall, some fly;  
And the red vapours purple all the sky;  
So raged Achilles: death and dire dismay,  
And toils, and terrors, fill'd the dreadful day.

High on a turret hoary Priam stands,  
And marks the waste of his destructive hands;  
Views, from his arm, the Trojans' scatter'd flight,  
And the near hero rising on his sight!  
No stop, no check, no aid! With feeble pace,  
And settled sorrow on his aged face,  
Fast as he could, he sighing quits the walls;  
And thus, descending, on the guards he calls—

‘ You to whose care our city gates belong,  
Set wide your portals to the flying throng:  
For lo! he comes with unresisted sway;  
He comes, and desolation marks his way!  
But when within the walls our troops take breath,  
Lock fast the brazen bars, and shut out death.’  
Thus charged the reverend monarch: wide were  
flung

The opening folds; the sounding hinges rung.  
Phœbus rush'd forth, the flying bands to meet;  
Struck slaughter back, and cover'd the retreat.  
On heaps the Trojans crowd to gain the gate,  
And gladsome see their last escape from Fate.  
Thither, all parch'd with thirst, a heartless train,  
Hoary with dust, they beat the hollow plain:  
And gasping, panting, fainting, labour on  
With heavier strides, that lengthen toward the  
town.

Enraged Achilles follows with his spear;  
Wild with revenge, insatiable of war.

Then had the Greeks eternal praise acquired,  
And Troy inglorious to her walls retired;

But he, the god who darts ethereal flame,  
Shot down to save her, and redeem her fame:  
To young Agenor force divine he gave  
(Antenor's offspring, haughty, bold, and brave);  
In aid of him, beside the beach he sat,  
And, wrapp'd in clouds, restrain'd the hand of Fate.  
When now the generous youth Achilles spies,  
Thick beats his heart, the troubled motions rise  
(So, ere a storm, the waters heave and roll);  
He stops, and questions thus his mighty soul—

‘ What, shall I fly this terror of the plain?  
Like others fly, and be like others slain?  
Vain hope! to shun him by the selfsame road  
Yon line of slaughter'd Trojans lately trod.  
No: with the common heap I scorn to fall—  
What if they pass'd me to the Trojan wall,  
While I decline to yonder path, that leads  
To Ida's forests and surrounding shades?  
So may I reach, conceal'd, the cooling flood,  
From my tired body wash the dirt and blood,  
As soon as night her dusky veil extends  
Return in safety to my Trojan friends.  
What if?—But wherefore all this vain debate?  
Stand I to doubt, within the reach of Fate?  
E'en now perhaps, ere yet I turn the wall,  
The fierce Achilles sees me, and I fall:  
Such is his swiftness, 'tis in vain to fly;  
And such his valour, that who stands must die.  
Howe'er 'tis better, fighting for the state,  
Here, and in public view, to meet my fate.  
Yet sure he too is mortal; he may feel  
(Like all the sons of earth) the force of steel;  
One only soul informs that dreadful frame:  
And Jove's sole favour gives him all his fame.’

He said, and stood collected in his might;  
And all his beating bosom claim'd the fight.  
So from some deep-grown wood a panther starts,  
Roused from his thicket by a storm of darts:  
Untaught to fear or fly, he hears the sounds  
Of shouting hunters, and of clamorous hounds;  
Though struck, though wounded, scarce perceives the pain;

And the barb'd javelin stings his breast in vain:  
On their whole war, untamed, the savage flies;  
And tears his hunter, or beneath him dies.  
Not less resolved, Antenor's valiant heir  
Confronts Achilles, and awaits the war,  
Disdainful of retreat: high-held before,  
His shield (a broad circumference) he bore;  
Then graceful as he stood, in act to throw  
The lifted javelin, thus bespoke the foe—

‘ How proud Achilles glories in his fame!  
And hopes this day to sink the Trojan name  
Beneath her ruins! Know, that hope is vain;  
A thousand woes, a thousand toils remain.  
Parents and children our just arms employ,  
And strong, and many are the sons of Troy.  
Great as thou art, e'en thou mayst stain with gore  
These Phrygian fields, and press a foreign shore.’

He said: with matchless force the javelin flung  
Smote on his knee; the hollow enishes rung  
Beneath the pointed steel; but safe from harms  
He stands impassive in the'etherial arms.  
Then fiercely rushing on the daring foe,  
His lifted arm prepares the fatal blow:  
But, jealous of his fame, Apollo shrouds  
The godlike Trojan in a veil of clouds.

Safe from pursuit, and shnt from mortal view,  
Dismiss'd with fame, the favour'd youth withdrew.  
Meanwhile the god, to cover their escape,  
Assumes Agenor's habit, voice, and shape,  
Flies from the furious chief in this disgnise;  
The furious chief still follows where he flies.  
Now o'er the fields they stretch with lengthen'd  
strides,  
Now urge the course where swift Scamander  
glides:  
The god, now distant scarce a stride before,  
Tempts his pursnit, and wheels about the shore;  
While all the flying troops their speed employ,  
And pour on heaps into the walls of Troy:  
No stop, no stay; no thought to ask, or tell,  
Who scaped by flight, or who by battle fell.  
'Twas tumult all, and violence of flight;  
And sudden joy confused, and mix'd affright:  
Pale Troy against Achilles shuts her gate:  
And nations breathe, deliver'd from their fate.

## BOOK XXII.

## The Argument.

## THE DEATH OF HECTOR.

The Trojans being safe within the walls, Hector only stays to oppose Achilles. Priam is struck at his approach, and tries to persuade his son to reenter the town. Hecuba joins her entreaties, but in vain. Hector consults within himself what measures to take; but at the advance of Achilles, his resolution fails him, and he flies. Achilles pursues him thrice round the walls of Troy. The gods debate concerning the fate of Hector; at length Minerva descends to the aid of Achilles. She deludes Hector in the shape of Deiphobus; he stands the combat, and is slain. Achilles drags the dead body at his chariot in the sight of Priam and Hecuba. Their lamentations, tears, and despair. Their cries reach the ears of Andromache, who, ignorant of this, was retired into the inner part of the palace: she mounts up to the walls, and beholds her dead husband. She swoons at the spectacle. Her excess of grief and lamentation.

The thirtieth day still continues. The scene lies under the walls, and on the battlements of Troy.

—  
THUS to their bulwarks, smit with panic fear,  
The herded Ilions rush like driven deer;  
There safe they wipe the briny drops away,  
And drown in bowls the labours of the day.  
Close to the walls, advancing o'er the fields  
Beneath one roof of well-compacted shields,  
March, bending on, the Greeks' embodied powers,  
Far-stretching in the shade of Trojan towers.

Great Hector singly stay'd: chain'd down by Fate,  
There fix'd he stood before the Scæan gate;  
Still his bold arms determined to employ,  
The guardian still of long-defended Troy.

Apollo now to tired Achilles turns  
(The power confess'd in all his glory burns);  
' And what (he cries) has Peleus' son in view,  
With mortal speed a godhead to pursue?  
For not to thee to know the gods is given,  
Unskill'd to trace the latent marks of Heaven.  
What boots thee now, that Troy forsook the plain?  
Vain thy past labour, and thy present vain:  
Safe in their walls are now her troops bestow'd,  
While here thy frantic rage attacks a god.'

The chief incensed—' Too partial god of day!  
To check my conquests in the middle way:  
How few in Ilion else had refuge found!  
What gasping numbers now had bit the ground!  
Thou robb'st me of a glory justly mine,  
Powerful of godhead, and of fraud divine:  
Mean fame, alas! for one of heavenly strain,  
To cheat a mortal who repines in vain.'

Then to the city, terrible and strong,  
With high and haughty steps he tower'd along.  
So the proud courser, victor of the prize,  
To the near goal with double ardour flies.  
Him, as he blazing shot across the field,  
The careful eyes of Priam first beheld.  
Not half so dreadful rises to the sight [night  
Through the thick gloom of some tempestuous  
Orion's dog (the year when autumn weighs),  
And o'er the feebler stars exerts his rays;  
Terrific glory! for his burning breath  
Taints the red air with fevers, plagues, and death.

So flamed his fiery mail. Then wept the sage:  
He strikes his reverend head, now white with age:  
He lifts his wither'd arms; obtests the skies;  
He calls his much-loved son with feeble cries:  
The son, resolved Achiiles' force to dare,  
Full at the Scæan gates expects the war;  
While the sad father on the rampart stands,  
And thus adjures him with extended hands—

‘ Ah stay not, stay not! guardless and alone;  
Hector! my loved, my dearest, bravest son!  
Methinks already I behold thee slain,  
And stretch'd beneath that fury of the plain.  
Implacable Aehilles! might'st thou be  
To all the gods no dearer than to me!  
Thee, vultures wild should scatter round the shore,  
And bloody dogs grow fiercer from thy gore.  
How many valiant sons I late enjoy'd,  
Valiant in vain! by thy cursed arm destroy'd:  
Or, worse than slaughter'd, sold in distant isles  
To shameful bondage, and unworthy toils.  
Two, while I speak, my eyes in vain explore,  
Two from one mother sprung, my Polydore,  
And loved Lycaon; now perhaps no more!  
Oh! if in yonder hostile camp they live,  
What heaps of gold, what treasures would I give!  
(Their grandsire's wealth, by right of birth their  
own,  
Consign'd his daughter with Lelegia's throne)  
But if (which Heaven forbid), already lost,  
All pale they wander on the Stygian coast;  
What sorrows then must their sad mother know,  
What anguish I! unutterable woe!  
Yet less that anguish, less to her, to me,  
Less to all Troy, if not deprived of thee.

Yet shun Achilles! enter yet the wall;  
And spare thyself, thy father, spare us all!  
Save thy dear life; or, if a soul so brave  
Neglect that thought, thy dearer glory save.  
Pity, while yet I live, these silver hairs;  
While yet thy father feels the woes he bears,  
Yet cursed with sense! a wretch, whom in his  
rage

(All trembling on the verge of helpless age)  
Great Jove has placed, sad spectacle of pain!  
The bitter dregs of Fortune's cup to drain:  
To fill with scenes of death his closing eyes,  
And number all his days by miseries!  
My heroes slain, my bridal bed o'erturn'd,  
My daughters ravish'd, and my city burn'd,  
My bleeding infants dash'd against the floor;  
These I have yet to see, perhaps yet more!  
Perhaps e'en I, reserved by angry Fate  
The last sad relic of my ruin'd state,  
(Dire pomp of sovereign wretchedness!) must fall,  
And stain the pavement of my regal hall;  
Where famish'd dogs, late guardians of my door,  
Shall lick their mangled master's spatter'd gore.  
Yet for my sons I thank ye gods! 'tis well;  
Well have they perish'd, for in fight they fell.  
Who dies in youth and vigour, dies the best,  
Struck through with wounds, all honest on the  
breast.  
But when the Fates, in fulness of their rage,  
Spurn the hoar head of unresisting age,  
In dust the reverend lineaments deform,  
And pour to dogs the life-blood scarcely warm;  
This, this is misery! the last, the worst,  
That man can feel; man fated to be cursed!'

He said, and acting what no words could say,  
Rent from his head the silver locks away.  
With him the mournful mother bears a part;  
Yet all her sorrows turn not Hector's heart;  
The zone unbraced, her bosom she display'd;  
And thus, fast-falling the salt tears, she said—

‘ Have mercy on me, O my son! revere  
The words of age; attend a parent's prayer!  
If ever thee in these fond arms I press'd,  
Or still'd thy infant clamours at this breast;  
Ah do not thus our helpless years forego,  
But, by our walls secured, repel the foe.  
Against his rage if singly thou proceed,  
Shouldst thou (but Heaven avert it!) shouldst  
thou bleed,  
Nor must thy corse lie honour'd on the bier,  
Nor spouse, nor mother, grace thee with a tear!  
Far from our pious rites those dear remains  
Must feast the vultures on the naked plains.’

So they, while down their cheeks the torrents roll;  
But fix'd remains the purpose of his soul;  
Resolved he stands, and with a fiery glance  
Expects the hero's terrible advance.  
So, roll'd up in his den, the swelling snake  
Beholds the traveller approach the brake;  
When fed with noxious herbs his turgid veins  
Have gather'd half the poisons of the plains;  
He burns, he stiffens with collected ire,  
And his red eyeballs glare with living fire.  
Beneath a turret, on his shield reclined,  
He stood, and question'd thus his mighty mind:

‘ Where lies my way? to enter in the wall?  
Honour and shame the' ungenerous thought recall:

Shall proud Polydamas before the gate  
Proclaim, his counsels are obey'd too late,  
Which timely follow'd but the former night,  
What numbers had been saved by Hector's flight?  
That wise advice rejected with disdain,  
I feel my folly in my people slain.  
Methinks my suffering country's voice I hear,  
But most her worthless sons insult my ear;  
On my rash courage charge the chance of war,  
And blame those virtues which they cannot share.  
No——if I e'er return, return I must  
Glorious, my country's terror laid in dust:  
Or if I perish, let her see me fall  
In field at least, and fighting for her wall.  
And yet suppose these measures I forego,  
Approach unarm'd, and parley with the foe,  
The warrior-shield, the helm, and lance, lay down,  
And treat on terms of peace to save the town:  
The wife withheld, the treasure ill-detain'd  
(Cause of the war, and grievance of the land),  
With honourable justice to restore:  
And add half Ilion's yet remaining store, [Greece  
Which Troy shall, sworn, produce; that injured  
May share our wealth, and leave our walls in peace.  
But why this thought? Unarm'd if I should go,  
What hope of mercy from this vengeful foe,  
But woman-like to fall, and fall without a blow?  
We greet not here, as man conversing man,  
Met at an oak, or journeying o'er a plain;  
No season now for calm familiar talk,  
Like youths and maidens in an evening walk:  
War is our business, but to whom is given  
To die, or triumph, that, determine Heaven!"

Thus pondering, like a god the Greek drew nigh;  
His dreadful plumage nodded from on high;

The Pelian javelin, in his better hand,  
Shot trembling rays that glitter'd o'er the land;  
And on his breast the beamy splendour shone  
Like Jove's own lightning or the rising sun.  
As Hector sees, unusual terrors rise,  
Struck by some god, he fears, recedes, and flies.  
He leaves the gates, he leaves the walls behind :  
Achilles follows like the winged wind :  
Thus at the panting dove a faleon flies  
(The swiftest racer of the liquid skies).  
Just when he holds, or thinks he holds his prey,  
Obliquely wheeling through the' aerial way,  
With open beak and shrilling cries he springs,  
And aims his claws, and shoots upon his wings :  
No less fore-right the rapid chase they held,  
One urged by fury, one by fear impell'd ; [taint,  
Now circling round the walls their course main-  
Where the high watch-tower overlooks the plain;  
Now where the fig-trees spread their umbrage  
broad,  
(A wider compass) smoke along the road.  
Next by Scamander's double source they bound,  
Where two famed fountains burst the parted  
ground ;  
This hot through scorching clefts is seen to rise,  
With exhalations steaming to the skies ;  
That the green baunks in summer's heat o'erflows,  
Like crystal clear, and cold as winter snows :  
Each gushing fount a modern cistern fills,  
Whose polish'd bed receives the falling rills ;  
Where Trojan dames (ere yet alarm'd by Greece)  
Wash'd their fair garments in the days of peace.  
By these they pass'd, one chasing, one in flight  
(The mighty fled, pursued by stronger might) :

Swift was the course; no vulgar prize they play,  
 No vulgar victim must reward the day,  
 (Such as in races crown the speedy strife):  
 The prize contended was great Hector's life.

As when some hero's funerals are decreed  
 In grateful honour of the mighty dead;  
 Where high rewards the vigorous youth inflame,  
 (Some golden tripod, or some lovely dame)  
 The panting coursers swiftly turn the goal,  
 And with them turns the raised spectator's soul;  
 Thus three times round the Trojan wall they fly.  
 The gazing gods lean forward from the sky;  
 To whom, while eager on the chase they look,  
 The sire of mortals and immortals spoke:

‘Unworthy sight! the man, beloved of Heaven,  
 Behold, inglorious round yon city driven!  
 My heart partakes the generous Hector's pain;  
 Hector, whose zeal whole hecatombs has slain,  
 Whose grateful fumes the gods received with joy,  
 From Ida's summits, and the towers of Troy:  
 Now see him flying; to his fears resign'd,  
 And Fate, and fierce Aehilles, close behind.  
 Consult, ye powers! ('tis worthy your debate)  
 Whether to snatch him from impending fate,  
 Or let him bear, by stern Pelides slain,  
 (Good as he is) the lot imposed on man?’

Then Pallas thus—‘Shall he whose vengeance  
 forms  
 The forked bolt, and blackens heaven with storms,  
 Shall he prolong one Trojan's forfeit breath?  
 A man, a mortal, preordain'd to death!  
 And will no murmurs fill the courts above?  
 No gods indignant blame their partial Jove?  
 ‘Go then (return'd the sire) without delay,  
 Exert thy will: I give the Fates their way.’

Swift at the mandate pleased Tritonia flies,  
And stoops impetuous from the cleaving skies.

As through the forest, o'er the vale and lawn  
The well-breathed beagle drives the flying fawn,  
In vain he tries the covert of the brakes,  
Or deep beneath the trembling thicket shakes ;  
Sure of the vapour in the tainted dews,  
The certain hound in various maze pursues ;  
Thus step by step, where'er the Trojan wheel'd,  
There swift Achilles compass'd round the field.  
Oft as to reach the Dardan gates he bends,  
And hopes the assistance of his pitying friends,  
(Whose showering arrows, as he coursed below,  
From the high turrets might oppress the foe)  
So oft Achilles turns him to the plain :  
He eyes the city, but he eyes in vain.  
As men in slumbers seem with speedy pace,  
One to pursue, and one to lead the chase,  
Their sinking limbs the fancied course forsake,  
Nor this can fly, nor that can overtake ;  
No less the labouring heroes pant and strain ;  
While that but flies, and this pursues in vain.

What god, O Muse, assisted Hector's force,  
With Fate itself so long to hold the course ?  
Phœbus it was ; who, in his latest hour,  
Endued his knees with strength, his nerves with  
power :

And great Achilles, lest some Greek's advance  
Should snatch the glory from his lifted lance,  
Sign'd to the troops, to yield his foe the way,  
And leave untouched the honours of the day.

Jove lifts the golden balances, that show  
The fates of mortal men, and things below :  
Here each contending hero's lot he tries,  
And weighs, with equal hand, their destinies.

Low sinks the scale surcharged with Hector's fate;  
Heavy with death it sinks, and hell receives the weight.

Then Phoebus left him. Fierce Minerva flies  
To stern Pelides, and triumphing, cries—  
' O loved of Jove! this day our labours cease,  
And conquest blazes with full beams on Greece.  
Great Hector falls; that Hector famed so far,  
Drunk with renown, insatiable of war,  
Falls by thy hand, and mine! nor force, nor flight,  
Shall more avail him, nor his god of light.  
See, where in vain he supplicates above,  
Roll'd at the feet of unrelenting Jove;  
Rest here: myself will lead the Trojan on,  
And urge to meet the fate he cannot shun.'

Her voice divine the chief with joyful mind  
Obey'd; and rested, on his lance reclined.  
While like Deiphobus the martial dame  
(Her face, her gesture, and her arms the same)  
In show an aid, by hapless Hector's side  
Approach'd, and greets him thus with voice  
belied—

' Too long, O Hector! have I borne the sight  
Of this distress, and sorrow'd in thy flight:  
It fits us now a noble stand to make,  
And here, as brothers, equal fates partake.'

Then he—' O prince! allied in blood and fame,  
Dearer than all that own a brother's name;  
Of all that Hecuba to Priam bore, [more!  
Long tried, long loved; much loved, but honour'd  
Since you, of all our numerous race alone  
Defend my life, regardless of your own.'

Again the goddess—' Much my father's prayer,  
And much my mother's, press'd me to forbear:

My friends embraced my knees, adjured my stay,  
But stronger love impell'd, and I obey.  
Come then, the glorious conflict let us try,  
Let the steel sparkle, and the javelin fly;  
Or let us stretch Achilles on the field,  
Or to his arm our bloody trophies yield.'

Fraudful she said; then swiftly march'd before:  
The Dardan hero shuns his foe no more.  
Sternly they met. The silence Hector broke;  
His dreadful plumage nodded as he spoke:

'Enough, O son of Peleus! Troy has view'd  
Her walls thrice circled, and her chief pursued.  
But now some god within me bids me try  
Thine, or my fate: I kill thee, or I die.

Yet on the verge of battle let us stay,  
And for a moment's space suspend the day;  
Let heaven's high powers be call'd to arbitrate  
The just conditions of this stern debate.

(Eternal witnesses of all below,  
And faithful guardians of the treasured vow!)  
To them I swear; if, victor in the strife,  
Jove by these hands shall shed thy noble life,  
No vile dishonour shall thy corse pursue;  
Stripp'd of its arms alone (the conqueror's due),  
The rest to Greece uninjured I'll restore:  
Now plight thy mutual oath, I ask no more.'

'Talk not of oaths (the dreadful chief replies,  
While anger flash'd from his disdainful eyes),  
Detested as thou art, and ought to be,  
Nor oath nor pact Achilles plights with thee:  
Such pacts as lambs and rabid wolves combine,  
Such leagues as men and furious lions join,  
To such I call the gods! one constant state  
Of lasting rancour and eternal hate:

No thought but rage, and never-ceasing strife,  
Till death extinguish rage, and thought, and life.  
Rouse then thy forces this important hour,  
Collect thy soul, and call forth all thy power.  
No further subterfuge, no further chance;  
'Tis Pallas, Pallas gives thee to my lance.  
Each Grecian ghost by thee deprived of breath,  
Now hovers round, and calls thee to thy death.'

He spoke, and launch'd his javelin at the foe;  
But Hector shunn'd the meditated blow:  
He stoop'd, while o'er his head the flying spear  
Sang innocent, and spent its force in air.  
Minerva watch'd it falling on the land,  
Then drew, and gave to great Achilles' hand,  
Unseen of Hector, who, elate with joy,  
Now shakes his lance, and braves the dread of  
Troy.

'The life you boasted to that javelin given,  
Prince! you have miss'd. My fate depends on  
Heaven.

To thee, presumptuous as thou art, unknown  
Or what must prove my fortune, or thy own.  
Boasting is but an art, our fears to blind,  
And with false terrors sink another's mind.  
But know, whatever fate I am to try,  
By no dishonest wound shall Hector die;  
I shall not fall a fugitive at least,  
My soul shall bravely issue from my breast.  
But first, try thou my arm; and may this dart  
End all my country's woes, deep buried in thy  
heart!'

The weapon flew, its course unerring held,  
Unerring, but the heavenly shield repell'd  
The mortal dart; resulting with a bound  
From off the ringing orb, it struck the ground.

Hector beheld his javelin fall in vain,  
Nor other lance, nor other hope remain ;  
He calls Deiphobus, demands a spear,  
In vain, for no Deiphobus was there.  
All comfortless he stands : then, with a sigh,  
'Tis so—Heaven wills it, and my hour is nigh !  
I deem'd Deiphobus had heard my call,  
But he secure lies guarded in the wall.  
A god deceived me; Pallas, 'twas thy deed,  
Death and black Fate approach ! 'tis I must bleed.  
No refuge now, no succour from above,  
Great Jove deserts me, and the son of Jove,  
Propitious once, and kind ! Then welcome Fate !  
'Tis true I perish, yet I perish great :  
Yet in a mighty deed I shall expire,  
Let future ages hear it, and admire !'

Fierce, at the word, his weighty sword he drew,  
And, all collected, on Achilles flew.  
So Jove's bold bird, high balanced in the air,  
Stoops from the clouds to truss the quivering hare.  
Nor less Achilles his fierce soul prepares :  
Before his breast the flaming shield he bears,  
Refulgent orb ! above his fourfold cone  
The gilded horsehair sparkled in the sun,  
Nodding at every step : (Vulcanian frame !)  
And as he moved, his figure seem'd on flame.  
As radiant Hesper shines with keener light,  
Far-beaming o'er the silver host of night,  
When all the starry train emblaze the sphere ;  
So shone the point of great Achilles' spear.  
In his right hand he waves the weapon round,  
Eyes the whole man, and meditates the wound ;  
But the rich mail Patroclus lately wore,  
Securely cased the warrior's body o'er.

One space at length he spies, to let in fate,  
 Where 'twixt the neck and throat the jointed plate  
 Gave entrance : through that penetrable part  
 Furious he drove the well-directed dart :  
 Nor pierced the windpipe yet, nor took the power  
 Of speech, unhappy ! from thy dying hour.  
 Prone on the field the bleeding warrior lies,  
 While, thus triumphing, stern Achilles cries—

‘ At last is Hector stretch'd upon the plain,  
 Who fear'd no vengeance for Patroclus slain :  
 Then, prince ! you should have fear'd, what now  
 Achilles absent, was Achilles still : [you feel ;  
 Yet a short space the great avenger stay'd,  
 Then low in dust thy strength and glory laid.  
 Peaceful he sleeps, with all our rites adorn'd,  
 For ever honour'd, and for ever mourn'd :  
 While, cast to all the rage of hostile power,  
 Thee birds shall mangle, and the dogs devour.’

Then Hector, fainting at the' approach of  
 death—

‘ By thy own soul ! by those who gave thee breath !  
 By all the sacred prevalence of prayer ;  
 Ah, leave me not for Grecian dogs to tear !  
 The common rites of sepulture bestow,  
 To sooth a father's and a mother's woe ;  
 Let their large gifts procure an urn at least,  
 And Hector's ashes in his country rest.’

‘ No, wretch accursed ! (relentless he replies ;  
 Flames, as he spoke, shot flashing from his eyes)  
 Not those who gave me breath should bid me spare,  
 Nor all the sacred prevalence of prayer.  
 Could I myself the bloody banquet join !  
 No—to the dogs that carcass I resign.  
 Should Troy, to bribe me, bring forth all her store,  
 And, giving thousands, offer thousands more ;

Should Dardan Priam, and his weeping dame,  
Drain their whole realm to buy one funeral flame:  
Their Hector on the pile they should not see,  
Nor rob the vultures of one limb of thee.'

Then thus the chief his dying accents drew—  
'Thy rage, implacable! too well I knew:  
The furies that relentless breast have steel'd,  
And eursed thee with a heart that cannot yield.  
Yet think, a day will come, when Fate's decree  
And angry gods shall wreak this wrong on thee;  
Phœbus and Paris shall avenge my fate,  
And stretch thee here, before the Scæan gate.'

He eased. The Fates suppress'd his labouring breath,  
And his eyes stiffen'd at the hand of death;  
To the dark *realm* the spirit wings its way,  
(The manly body left a load of clay)  
And plaintive glides along the dreary coast,  
A naked, wandering, melancholy ghost!

Aehilles, musing as he roll'd his eyes  
O'er the dead hero, thus, unheard, replies—  
'Die thou the first! When Jove and Heaven  
ordain,  
I follow thee'—He said, and stripp'd the slain.  
Then foreing backward from the gaping wound  
The reeking javelin, cast it on the ground.  
The thronging Greeks behold with wondering eyes  
His manly beauty and superior size:  
While some, ignobler, the great dead deface  
With wounds ungenerous, or with taunts disgrace:  
'How changed that Hector who like Jove of late  
Sent lightning on our fleets, and scatter'd fate!'

High o'er the slain the great Achilles stands,  
Begirt with heroes, and surrounding bands;

And thus aloud, while all the host attends—  
‘Princes and leaders! countrymen and friends!  
Since now at length the powerful will of Heaven  
The dire destroyer to our arm has given,  
Is not Troy fallen already? Haste, ye powers!  
See, if already their deserted towers  
Are left unmann’d; or if they yet retain  
The souls of heroes, their great Hector slain?  
But what is Troy, or glory what to me?  
Or why reflects my mind on aught but thee,  
Divine Patroclus! Death has seal’d his eyes;  
Unwept, unhonour’d, uninterr’d he lies!  
Can his dear image from my soul depart,  
Long as the vital spirit moves my heart?  
If in the melancholy shades below,  
The flames of friends and lovers cease to glow,  
Yet mine shall sacred last; mine, undecay’d,  
Burn on through death, and animate my shade.  
Meanwhile, ye sons of Greece, in triumph bring  
The corpse of Hector, and your pæans sing.  
Be this the song, slow-moving toward the shore,  
‘Hector is dead, and Ilion is no more.’

Then his fell soul a thought of vengeance bred  
(Unworthy of himself, and of the dead);  
The nervous ancles bored, his feet he bound  
With thongs inserted through the double wound;  
These fix’d up high behiind the rolling wain,  
His graceful head was trail’d along the plain.  
Proud on his car the’ insulting victor stood,  
And bore aloft his arms, distilling blood.  
He smites the steeds; the rapid chariot flies;  
The sudden clouds of circling dust arise.  
Now lost is all that formidable air;  
The face divine, and long-descending hair,



HOMER.

Proud on his car th'insulting victor stood,  
And bore aloft his arms distilling blood.

*Iliad. Book XXX.*

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Purple the ground, and streak the sable sand ;  
Deform'd, dishonour'd, in his native land,  
Given to the rage of an insulting throng,  
And, in his parents' sight, now dragg'd along !

The mother first beheld with sad survey ;  
She rent her tresses, venerably gray,  
And cast, far off, the regal veils away.  
With piercing shrieks his bitter fate she moans,  
While the sad father answers groans with groans ;  
Tears after tears his mournful cheeks o'erflow,  
And the whole city wears one face of woe :  
No less than if the rage of hostile fires,  
From her foundations curling to her spires,  
O'er the proud citadel at length should rise,  
And the last blaze send Ilion to the skies.  
The wretched monarch of the falling state,  
Distracted, presses to the Dardan gate.  
Scarce the whole people stop his desperate course,  
While strong affliction gives the feeble force :  
Grief tears his heart, and drives him to and fro,  
In all the raging impotency of woe.  
At length he roll'd in dust, and thus begun,  
Imploring all, and naming one by one—  
‘ Ah ! let me, let me go where sorrow calls ;  
I, only I, will issue from your walls  
(Guide or companion, friends ! I ask ye none),  
And bow before the murderer of my son.  
My grief perhaps his pity may engage ; . .  
Perhaps at least he may respect my age.  
He has a father too ; a man like me ;  
One, not exempt from age and misery  
(Vigorous no more, as when his young embrace  
Begot this pest of me, and all my race) :

How many valiant sons, in early bloom,  
Has that cursed hand sent headlong to the tomb !  
Thee, Hector ! last : thy loss (divinely brave)  
Sinks my sad soul with sorrow to the grave.  
O had thy gentle spirit pass'd in peace,  
The son expiring in the sire's embrace,  
While both the parents wept the fatal hour,  
And, bending o'er thee, mix'd the tender shower !  
Some comfort that had been, some sad relief,  
To melt in full satiety of grief !

Thus wail'd the father, groveling on the ground,  
And all the eyes of Ilion stream'd around.

Amidst her matrons Hecuba appears  
(A mourning princess, and a train in tears),  
' Ah, why has Heaven prolong'd this hated breath,  
Patient of horrors, to behold thy death ?  
O Hector ! late thy parents' pride and joy,  
The boast of nations ! the defence of Troy !  
To whom her safety and her fame she owed ;  
Her chief, her hero, and almost her god !  
O fatal change ! become in one sad day  
A senseless corpse ! inanimated clay !'

But not as yet the fatal news had spread  
To fair Andromache, of Hector dead ;  
As yet no messenger had told his fate,  
Nor e'en his stay without the Scæan gate.  
Far in the close recesses of the dome,  
Pensive she plied the melancholy loom ;  
A growing work employ'd her secret hours,  
Confusedly gay with intermingled flowers.  
Her fair-hair'd handmaids heat the brazen urn,  
The bath preparing for her lord's return :  
In vain : alas ! her lord returns no more !  
Unbathed he lies, and bleeds along the shore !

Now from the walls the clamours reach her ear,  
And all her members shake with sudden fear ;  
Forth from her ivory hand the shuttle falls,  
And thus, astonish'd, to her maids she calls—

‘ Ah, follow me ! (she cried) what plaintive noise  
Invades my ear ? ’Tis sure my mother’s voice.  
My faltering knees their trembling frame desert,  
A pulse unusual flutters at my heart ;  
Some strange disaster, some reverse of fate  
(Ye gods avert it !) threatens the Trojan state.  
Far be the omen which my thoughts suggest !  
But much I fear my Hector’s dauntless breast  
Confronts Achilles ; chased along the plain,  
Shut from our walls ! I fear, I fear him slain !  
Safe in the crowd he ever scorn’d to wait,  
And sought for glory in the jaws of fate :  
Perhaps that noble heat has cost his breath,  
Now quench’d for ever in the arms of death.’

She spoke ; and furious, with distracted pace,  
Fears in her heart, and anguish in her face,  
Flies through the dome (the maids her steps pursue)  
And mounts the walls, and sends around her view.  
Too soon her eyes the killing object found,  
The godlike Hector dragg’d along the ground.  
A sudden darkness shades her swimming eyes :  
She faints, she falls ; her breath, her colour, flies.  
Her hair’s fair ornaments, the braids that bound,  
The net that held them, and the wreath that  
The veil and diadem, flew far away [crown’d,  
(The gift of Venus on her bridal day).  
Around a train of weeping sisters stands,  
To raise her sinking with assistant hands,  
Scarce from the verge of death recall’d, again  
She faints, or but recovers to complain.

‘ O wretched husband of a wretched wife !  
Born with one fate, to one unhappy life !  
For sure one star its baneful beam display’d  
On Priam’s roof, and Hippoplacia’s shade.  
From different parents, different climes we came,  
At different periods, yet our fate the same !  
Why was my birth to great Aëtion owed,  
And why was all that tender care bestow’d ?  
Would I had never been !—O thou, the ghost  
Of my dear husband ! miserably lost !  
Thou to the dismal realms for ever gone !  
And I abandon’d, desolate, alone !  
An only child, once comfort of my pains,  
Sad product now of hapless love, remains !  
No more to smile upon his sire ! no friend  
To help him now ! no father to defend ! [doom,  
For should he scape the sword, the common  
What wrongs attend him, and what griefs to come !  
E’en from his own paternal roof expell’d,  
Some stranger ploughs his patrimonial field.  
The day, that to the shades the father sends,  
Robs the sad orphan of his father’s friends :  
He, wretched outcast of mankind ! appears  
For ever sad, for ever bathed in tears ;  
Amongst the happy, unregarded, he  
Hangs on the robe, or trembles at the knee,  
While those his father’s former bounty fed,  
Nor reach the goblet, nor divide the bread :  
The kindest but his present wants allay,  
To leave him wretched the succeeding day.  
Frugal compassion ! Heedless, they who boast  
Both parents still, nor feel what he has lost,  
Shall cry, ‘ Begone ! thy father feasts not here,’  
The wretch obeys, retiring with a tear.

Thus wretched, thus retiring all in tears,  
To my sad soul Astyanax appears!  
Forced by repeated insults to return,  
And to his widow'd mother vainly mourn:  
He, who, with tender delicacy bred,  
With princes sported, and on dainties fed,  
And when still evening gave him up to rest,  
Sunk soft in down upon the nurse's breast,  
Must—ah what must he not? Whom Ilion calls  
Astyanax, from her well-guarded walls,  
Is now that name no more, unhappy boy!  
Since now no more the father guards his Troy.  
But thou, my Hector, liest exposed in air,  
Far from thy parents' and thy consort's care;  
Whose hand in vain, directed by her love,  
The martial scarf and robe of triumph wove.  
Now to devouring flames be these a prey,  
Useless to thee, from this accursed day!  
Yet let the sacrifice at least be paid,  
An honour to the living, not the dead!'

So spake the mournful dame: her matrons hear,  
Sigh back her sighs, and answer tear with tear.

## BOOK XXIII.

## The Argument.

Achilles and the Myrmidons do honours to the body of Patroclus. After the funeral feast he retires to the seashore, where, falling asleep, the ghost of his friend appears to him, and demands the rites of burial ; the next morning the soldiers are sent with mules and waggons to fetch wood for the pyre. The funeral procession, and the offering their hair to the dead. Achilles sacrifices several animals, and lastly twelve Trojan captives, at the pile, then sets fire to it. He pays libations to the winds, which (at the instance of Iris) rise, and raise the flames. When the pile has burned all night, they gather the bones, place them in an urn of gold, and raise the tomb. Achilles institutes the funeral games : the chariot race, the fight of the cæstus, the wrestling, the foot race, the single combat, the discus, the shooting with arrows, the darting the javelin: the various descriptions of which, and the various success of the several antagonists, make the greatest part of the book.

In this book ends the thirtieth day. The night following, the ghost of Patroclus appears to Achilles : the one-and-thirtieth day is employed in felling the timber for the pile ; the two-and-thirtieth in burning it ; and the three-and-thirtieth in the games. The scene is generally on the seashore

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THUS humbled in the dust, the pensive train  
Through the sad city mourn'd her hero slain.  
The body soil'd with dust, and black with gore,  
Lies on broad Hellespont's resounding shore.  
The Grecians seek their ships, and clear the strand,  
All, but the martial Myrmidonian band :  
These yet assembled great Achilles holds,  
And the stern purpose of his mind unfolds :

‘ Not yet, my brave companions of the war,  
Release your smoking coursers from the car;  
But, with his chariot each in order led,  
Perform due honours to Patroclus dead.  
Ere yet from rest or food we seek relief,  
Some rites remain, to glut our rage of grief.’

The troops obey’d ; and thrice in order led  
(Achilles first) their coursers round the dead ;  
And thrice their sorrows and laments renew ;  
Tears bathe their arms, and tears the sands bedew.  
For such a warrior Thetis aids their woe, [flow.  
Melts their strong hearts, and bids their eyes to  
But chief, Pelides : thick-succeeding sighs  
Burst from his heart, and torrents from his eyes :  
His slaughtering hands, yet red with blood, he laid  
On his dead friend’s cold breast, and thus he said—

‘ All hail, Patroclus ! let thy honour’d ghost  
Hear, and rejoice on Pluto’s gloomy coast ;  
Behold ! Achilles’ promise is complete ;  
The bloody Hector stretch’d before thy feet.  
Lo ! to the dogs his carcass I resign ;  
And twelve sad victims, of the Trojan line,  
Sacred to vengeance, instant shall expire ;  
Their lives effused around thy funeral pyre.’

Gloomy he said, and (horrible to view)  
Before the bier the bleeding Hector threw,  
Prone on the dust. The Myrmidons around  
Unbraced their armour, and the steeds unbound.  
All to Achilles’ sable ship repair,  
Frequent and full, the genial feast to share.  
Now from the well-fed swine black smokes aspire,  
The bristly victims hissing o’er the fire :  
The huge ox bellowing falls ; with feebler cries  
Expires the goat ; the sheep in silence dies.

Around the hero's prostrate body flow'd,  
In one promiscuous stream, the reeking blood.  
And now a band of Argive monarchs brings  
The glorious victor to the king of kings.  
From his dead friend the pensive warrior went,  
With steps unwilling, to the regal tent.  
The attending heralds, as by office bound,  
With kindled flames the tripod vase surround ;  
To cleanse his conquering hands from hostile gore,  
They urged in vain ; the chief refused, and swore—

‘ No drop shall touch me, by almighty Jove !  
The first and greatest of the gods above !  
Till on the pyre I place thee ; till I rear  
The grassy mound, and clip thy sacred hair.  
Some ease at least those pious rites may give,  
And sooth my sorrows, while I bear to live.  
Howe'er, reluctant as I am, I stay,  
And share your feast ; but, with the dawn of day,  
(O king of men !) it claims thy royal care,  
That Greece the warrior's funeral pile prepare,  
And bid the forests fall (such rites are paid  
To heroes slumbering in eternal shade) :  
Then when his earthly part shall mount in fire,  
Let the leagued squadrons to their posts retire.’

He spoke ; they hear him, and the word obey ;  
The rage of hunger and of thirst allay,  
Then ease in sleep the labours of the day.  
But great Pelides, stretch'd along the shore,  
Where, dash'd on rocks, the broken billows roar,  
Lies inly groaning ; while on either hand  
The martial Myrmidons confusedly stand.  
Along the grass his languid members fall,  
Tired with his chase around the Trojan wall ;  
Hush'd by the murmurs of the rolling deep,  
At length he sinks in the soft arms of sleep.

When lo! the shade, before his closing eyes,  
Of sad Patroclus rose, or seem'd to rise:  
In the same robe he living wore, he came:  
In stature, voice, and pleasing look, the same.  
The form familiar hover'd o'er his head,  
‘And sleeps Achilles (thus the phantom said),  
Sleeps my Achilles, his Patroclus dead?  
Living, I seem'd his dearest, tenderest care,  
But now forgot, I wander in the air.  
Let my pale corpse the rites of burial know,  
And give me entrance in the realms below:  
Till then, the spirit finds no resting place,  
But here and there the unbodied spectres chase  
The vagrant dead around the dark abode,  
Forbid to cross the irremeable flood.  
Now give thy hand; for to the further shore  
When once we pass, the soul returns no more:  
When once the last funereal flames ascend,  
No more shall meet Achilles and his friend;  
No more our thoughts to those we loved make  
known;  
Or quit the dearest, to converse alone.  
Me Fate has sever'd from the sons of earth,  
The fate foredoom'd that waited from my birth:  
Thee too it waits; before the Trojan wall  
E'en great and godlike thou art doom'd to fall.  
Hear then; and as in fate and love we join,  
Ah suffer that my bones may rest with thine!  
Together have we lived; together bred,  
One house received us, and one table fed;  
That golden urn, thy goddess-mother gave,  
May mix our ashes in one common grave.’  
‘And is it thou? (he answers) to my sight  
Once more return’st thou from the realms of night?

O more than brother! Think each office paid,  
Whate'er can rest a discontented shade;  
But grant one last embrace, unhappy boy!  
Afford at least that melancholy joy.'

He said, and with his longing arms essay'd  
In vain to grasp the visionary shade;  
Like a thin smoke he sees the spirit fly,  
And hears a feeble lamentable cry.  
Confused he wakes; amazement breaks the bands  
Of golden sleep, and starting from the sands,  
Pensive he muses with uplifted hands:

‘Tis true, 'tis certain; man, though dead, retains  
Part of himself; the immortal mind remains:  
The form subsists without the body's aid,  
Aerial semblance, and an empty shade!  
This night my friend, so late in battle lost,  
Stood at my side, a pensive, plaintive ghost;  
E'en now familiar, as in life, he came;  
Alas! how different! yet how like the same!'

Thus while he spoke, each eye grew big with  
And now the rosy finger'd morn appears, [tears:  
Shows every mournful face with tears o'erspread,  
And glares on the pale visage of the dead.  
But Agamemnon, as the rites demand,  
With mules and waggons sends a chosen band  
To load the timber, and the pile to rear;  
A charge consign'd to Merion's faithful care.  
With proper instruments they take the road,  
Axes to cut, and ropes to sling the load.  
First march the heavy mules, securely slow,  
O'er hills, o'er dales, o'er crags, o'er rocks, they go:  
Jumping, high o'er the shrubs of the rough ground,  
Rattle the clattering cars, and the shock'd axles  
bound.

But when arrived at Ida's spreading woods  
(Fair Ida, water'd with descending floods),  
Loud sounds the axe, redoubling strokes on  
strokes;  
On all sides round the forest hurls her oaks  
Headlong. Deep-echoing groan the thickets  
brown;  
Then rustling, crackling, crashing, thunder down.  
The wood the Grecians cleave, prepared to burn;  
And the slow mules the same rough road return.  
The sturdy woodmen equal burdens bore  
(Such charge was given them) to the sandy shore;  
There on the spot which great Achilles show'd,  
They eased their shoulders, and disposed the load;  
Circling around the place, where times to come  
Shall view Patroclus' and Achilles' tomb.  
The hero bids his martial troops appear  
High on their cars in all the pomp of war;  
Each in resplendent arms his limbs attires,  
All mount the chariots, combatants and squires.  
The chariots first proceed, a shining train;  
Then clouds of foot that smoke along the plain;  
Next these the melancholy band appear,  
Amidst, lay dead Patroclus on the bier:  
O'er all the corpse their scatter'd locks they throw;  
Achilles next, oppress'd with mighty woe,  
Supporting with his hands the hero's head,  
Bends o'er the' extended body of the dead.  
Patroclus decent on the' appointed ground  
They place, and heap the silvan pile around.  
But great Achilles stands apart in prayer,  
And from his head divides the yellow hair;  
Those curling locks which from his youth he vow'd,  
And sacred grew, to Sperchius' honour'd flood:

Then, sighing, to the deep his looks he cast,  
And roll'd his eyes around the watery waste:

‘ Sperchius ! whose waves in mazy errors lost  
Delightful roll along my native coast !  
To whom we vainly vow'd, at our return,  
These locks to fall, and hecatombs to burn :  
Full fifty rams to bleed in sacrifice,  
Where to the day thy silver fountains rise,  
And where in shade of consecrated bowers  
Thy altars stand, perfumed with native flowers !  
So vow'd my father, but he vow'd in vain ;  
No more Achilles sees his native plain ;  
In that vain hope these hairs no longer grow,  
Patroclus bears them to the shades below .’

Thus o'er Patroclus while the hero pray'd,  
On his cold hand the sacred lock he laid.  
Once more afresh the Grecian sorrows flow :  
And now the Sun had set upon their woe ;  
But to the king of men thus spoke the chief—  
‘ Enough, Atrides ! give the troops relief :  
Permit the mourning legions to retire,  
And let the chiefs alone attend the pyre ;  
The pious care be ours, the dead to burn ——’  
He said : the people to their ships return :  
While those deputed to inter the slain  
Heap with a rising pyramid the plain.  
A hundred foot in length, a hundred wide,  
The growing structure spreads on every side ;  
High on the top the manly corse they lay,  
And well-fed sheep, and sable oxen slay :  
Achilles cover'd with their fat the dead,  
And the piled victims round the body spread ;  
Then jars of honey, and of fragrant oil,  
Suspends around, low-bending o'er the pile.

Four sprightly coursers, with a deadly groan  
Pour forth their lives, and on the pyre are thrown,  
Of nine large dogs, domestic at his board,  
Fall two, selected to attend their lord.  
The last of all, and horrible to tell,  
Sad sacrifice! twelve Trojan captives fell.  
On these the rage of fire victorious preys,  
Involves and joins them in one common blaze.  
Smear'd with the bloody rites, he stands on high,  
And calls the spirit with a dreadful cry:

‘ All hail, Patroclus! let thy vengeful ghost  
Hear, and exult, on Pluto’s dreary coast.  
Behold, Achilles’ promise fully paid,  
Twelve Trojan heroes offer’d to thy shade;  
But heavier fates on Hector’s corpse attend,  
Saved from the flames, for hungry dogs to rend.’

So spake he, threatening: but the gods made  
vain

His threat, and guard inviolate the slain:  
Celestial Venus hover’d o’er his head,  
And roseate unguents, heavenly fragrance! shed:  
She watch’d him all the night, and all the day,  
And drove the bloodhounds from their destined  
prey.

Nor sacred Phœbus less employ’d his care;  
He pour’d around a veil of gather’d air,  
And kept the nerves undried, the flesh entire,  
Against the solar beam and Syrian fire.

Nor yet the pile where dead Patroclus lies  
Smokes, nor as yet the sullen flames arise;  
But, fast beside Achilles stood in prayer,  
Invoked the gods whose spirit moves the air,  
And victims promised, and libations cast,  
To gentle Zephyr and the boreal blast:

He call'd the' aerial powers, along the skies  
To breathe, and whisper to the fires to rise.  
The winged Iris heard the hero's call,  
And instant hasten'd to their airy hall,  
Where, in old Zephyr's open courts on high,  
Sat all the blustering brethren of the sky.  
She shone amidst them, on her painted bow ;  
The rocky pavement glitter'd with the show.  
All from the banquet rise, and each invites  
The various goddess to partake the rites.  
' Not so (the dame replied), I haste to go  
To sacred Ocean, and the floods below :  
E'en now our solemn hecatombs attend,  
And Heaven is feasting on the world's green end,  
With righteous Ethiops (uncorrupted train !)  
Far on the' extremest limits of the main.  
But Peleus' son entreats, with sacrifice,  
The western spirit, and the north, to rise ;  
Let on Patroclus' pile your blast be driven,  
And bear the blazing honours high to heaven.'

Swift as the word she vanish'd from their view ;  
Swift as the word the winds tumultuous flew ;  
Forth burst the stormy band with thundering roar,  
And heaps on heaps the clouds are toss'd before.  
To the wide main then stooping from the skies,  
The heaving deeps in watery mountains rise :  
Troy feels the blast along her shaking walls,  
Till on the pile the gather'd tempest falls.  
The structure crackles in the roaring fires,  
And all the night the plenteous flame aspires.  
All night Achilles hails Patroclus' soul,  
With large libations from the golden bowl.  
As a poor father, helpless and undone,  
Mourns o'er the ashes of an only son,

Takes a sad pleasure the last bones to burn,  
And pour in tears, ere yet they close the urn;  
So stay'd Achilles, circling round the shore,  
So watch'd the flames, till now they flame no more.  
'Twas when, emerging through the shades of night,  
The morning planet told the' approach of light;  
And, fast behind, Aurora's warmer ray  
O'er the broad ocean pou'r'd the golden day;  
Then sunk the blaze, the pile no longer burn'd,  
And to their caves the whistling winds return'd:  
Across the Thracian seas their course they bore;  
The ruffled seas beneath their passage roar.

Then parting from the pile he ceased to weep,  
And sunk to quiet in the' embrace of sleep,  
Exhausted with his grief: meanwhile the crowd  
Of thronging Grecians round Achilles stood;  
The tumult waked him: from his eyes he shook  
Unwilling slumber, and the chiefs bespoke:

‘ Ye kings and princes of the' Achaian name!  
First let us quench the yet remaining flame  
With sable wine; then, as the rites direct,  
The hero's bones with careful view select  
(Apart, and easy to be known they lie  
Amidst the heap, and obvious to the eye:  
The rest around the margins will be seen  
Promiscuous steeds, and immolated men):  
These, wrapp'd in double cawls of fat, prepare;  
And in the golden vase dispose with care;  
There let them rest with decent honour laid,  
Till I shall follow to the' infernal shade.  
Meantime erect the tomb with pions hands,  
A common structure on the humble sands;  
Hereafter Greece some nobler work may raise,  
And late posterity record our praise.’

The Greeks obey; where yet the embers glow,  
Wide o'er the pile the sable wine they throw,  
And deep subsides the ashy heap below.  
Next the white bones his sad companions place,  
With tears collected, in the golden vase.  
The sacred relics to the tent they bore;  
The urn a veil of linen cover'd o'er.  
That done, they bid the sepulchre aspire,  
And cast the deep foundations round the pyre;  
High in the midst they heap the swelling bed  
Of rising earth, memorial of the dead.

The swarming populace the chief detains,  
And leads amidst a wide extent of plains;  
There placed them round: then from the ships  
proceeds

A train of oxen, mules, and stately steeds,  
Vases and tripods (for the funeral games),  
Resplendent brass, and more resplendent dames.  
First stood the prizes to reward the force  
Of rapid racers in the dusty course:  
A woman for the first, in beauty's bloom,  
Skill'd in the needle, and the labouring loom;  
And a large vase, where two bright handles rise,  
Of twenty measures its capacious size.  
The second victor claims a mare unbroke,  
Big with a mule, unknowing of the yoke:  
The third, a charger yet untouched by flame;  
Four ample measures held the shining frame:  
Two golden talents for the fourth were placed:  
An ample double bowl contents the last.  
These in fair order ranged upon the plain,  
The hero, rising, thus address'd the train—

‘ Behold the prizes, valiant Greeks! decreed  
To the brave rulers of the racing steed;

Prizes which none beside ourself could gain,  
Should our immortal coursers take the plain  
(A race unrival'd, which from ocean's god  
Peleus received, and on his son bestow'd);  
But this no time our vigour to display;  
Nor suit with them the games of this sad day:  
Lost is Patroclus now, that wont to deck  
Their flowing manes, and sleek their glossy neck.  
Sad, as they shared in human grief, they stand,  
And trail those graceful honours on the sand!  
Let others for the noble task prepare,  
Who trust the courser, and the flying car.'

Fired at his word, the rival racers rise;  
But far the first Eumelus hopes the prize,  
Famed through Pieria for the fleetest breed,  
And skill'd to manage the high-bounding steed.  
With equal ardour bold Tydides swell'd,  
The steeds of Tros beneath his yoke compell'd  
(Which late obey'd the Dardan chief's command,  
When scarce a god redeem'd him from his hand).  
Then Menelaüs his Podargus brings,  
And the famed courser of the king of kings:  
Whom rich Echepolus (more rich than brave),  
To scape the wars, to Agamemnon gave,  
(Æthè her name) at home to end his days;  
Base wealth preferring to eternal praise.  
Next him Antilochus demands the course,  
With beating heart, and cheers his Pylian horse.  
Experienced Nestor gives his son the reins,  
Directs his judgment, and his heat restrains;  
Nor idly warns the hoary sire, nor hears  
The prudent son with unattending ears.

‘ My son! though youthful ardour fire thy breast,  
The gods have loved thee, and with arts have  
bless'd:

Neptune and Jove on thee conferr'd the skill  
Swift round the goal to turn the flying wheel.  
To guide thy conduct, little precept needs;  
But slow, and past their vigour, are my steeds.  
Fear not thy rivals, though for swiftness known;  
Compare those rivals' judgment, and thy own:  
It is not strength, but art, obtains the prize,  
And to be swift is less than to be wise.

'Tis more by art, than force of numerous strokes,  
The dexterous woodman shapes the stubborn oaks;  
By art the pilot, through the boiling deep  
And howling tempest, steers the fearless ship;  
And 'tis the artist wins the glorious course,  
Not those who trust in chariots and in horse.  
In vain, unskilful, to the goal they strive,  
And short, or wide, the ungovern'd courser drive:  
While with sure skill, though with inferior steeds,  
The knowing racer to his end proceeds;  
Fix'd on the goal his eye foreruns the course,  
His hand unerring steers the steady horse,  
And now contracts, or now extends the rein,  
Observing still the foremost on the plain.  
Mark then the goal, 'tis easy to be found;  
Yon aged trunk, a cubit from the ground;  
Of some once stately oak the last remains,  
Or hardy fir, imperish'd with the rains:  
Enclosed with stones, conspicuous from afar;  
And round, a circle for the wheeling car  
(Some tomb perhaps of old, the dead to grace;  
Or then, as now, the limit of a race).  
Bear close to this, and warily proceed,  
A little bending to the left hand steed;  
But urge the right, and give him all the reins;  
While thy strict hand his fellow's head restrains,

And turns him short; till, doubling as they roll,  
The wheel's round naves appear to brush the goal.  
Yet (not to break the car, or lame the horse)  
Clear of the stony heap direct the course;  
Lest, through incaution failing, thou mayst be  
A joy to others, a reproach to me.  
So shalt thou pass the goal, secure of mind,  
And leave unskilful swiftness far behind:  
Though thy fierce rival drove the matchless steed  
Which bore Adrastus, of celestial breed;  
Or the famed race through all the regions known,  
That whirl'd the car of proud Laomedon.'

Thus (nought unsaid) the much-advising sage  
Concludes; then sat, stiff with unwieldy age.  
Next bold Meriones was seen to rise,  
The last, but not least ardent for the prize.  
They mount their seats; the lots their place dispose  
(Roll'd in his helmet, these Achilles throws).  
Young Nestor leads the race: Eumelus then;  
And next the brother of the king of men:  
Thy lot, Meriones, the fourth was cast;  
And, far the bravest, Diomed, was last.  
They stand in order an impatient train:  
Pelides points the barrier on the plain,  
And sends before old Phoenix to the place,  
To mark the racers, and to judge the race.  
At once the coursers from the barrier bound;  
The lifted scourges all at once resound;  
Their heart, their eyes, their voice, they send  
before;  
And up the champaign thunder from the shore:  
Thick, where they drive, the dusty clouds arise,  
And the last courser in the whirlwind flies;  
Loose on their shoulders the long manes reclined,  
Float in their speed, and dance upon the wind:

The smoking chariots, rapid as they bound,  
Now seem to touch the sky, and now the ground.  
While hot for fame, and conquest all their care,  
(Each o'er his flying courser hung in air)  
Erect with ardour, poised upon the rein,  
They pant, they stretch, they shout along the plain.  
Now (the last compass fetch'd around the goal)  
At the near prize each gathers all his soul,  
Each burns with double hope, with double pain,  
Tears up the shore, and thunders toward the main.  
First flew Eumelus on Pheretian steeds;  
With those of Tros bold Diomed succeeds :  
Close on Eumelus' back they puff the wind,  
And seem just mounting on his car behind ;  
Full on his neck he feels the sultry breeze,  
And, hovering o'er, their stretching shadows sees.  
Then had he lost, or left a doubtful prize ;  
But angry Phœbus to Tydides flies,  
Strikes from his hand the scourge, and renders vain  
His matchless horses' labour on the plain.  
Rage fills his eye with anguish, to survey  
Snatch'd from his hope the glories of the day.  
The fraud celestial Pallas sees with pain,  
Springs to her knight, and gives the scourge again,  
And fills his steeds with vigour. At a stroke  
She breaks his rival's chariot from the yoke :  
No more their way the startled horses held ;  
The car reversed came rattling on the field ;  
Shot headlong from his seat beside the wheel,  
Prone on the dust the unhappy master fell ;  
His batter'd face and elbows strike the ground ;  
Nose, mouth, and front, one undistinguish'd  
wound :  
Grief stops his voice, a torrent drowns his eyes :  
Before him far the glad Tydides flies ;

Minerva's spirit drives his matchless pace,  
And crowns him victor of the labour'd race.

The next, though distant, Menelaüs succeeds ;  
While thus young Nestor animates his steeds :  
' Now, now, my generous pair, exert your force ;  
Not that we hope to match Tydides' horse,  
Since great Minerva wings their rapid way,  
And gives their lord the honours of the day :  
But reach Atrides ! shall his mare outgo  
Your swiftness ? vanquish'd by a female foe !  
Through your neglect, if lagging on the plain  
The last ignoble gift be all we gain,  
No more shall Nestor's hand your food supply,  
The old man's fury rises, and ye die.  
Haste then : yon narrow road, before our sight,  
Presents the' occasion, could we use it right.'

Thus he. The coursers at their master's threat  
With quicker steps the sounding champaign beat.  
And now Antilochus with nice survey  
Observes the compass of the hollow way.  
' Twas where, by force of wintry torrents torn,  
Fast by the road a precipice was worn :  
Here, where but one could pass, to shun the throng  
The Spartan hero's chariot smoked along.  
Close up the venturous youth resolves to keep,  
Still edging near, and bears him toward the steep.  
Atrides, trembling, casts his eye below,  
And wonders at the rashness of his foe.  
' Hold, stay your steeds—What madness thus to  
ride  
This narrow way ! take larger field (he cried)  
Or both must fall'—Atrides cried in vain ;  
He flies more fast, and throws up all the rein.  
Far as an able arm the disk can send,  
When youthful rivals their full force extend,

So far, Antilochus! thy chariot flew  
Before the king: he, cautious, backward drew  
His horse compell'd; foreboding in his fears  
The rattling ruin of the clashing cars,  
The floundering coursers rolling on the plain,  
And conquest lost through frantic haste to gain.  
But thus upbraids his rival as he flies—

‘ Go, furious youth! ungenerous and unwise!  
Go, but expect not I'll the prize resign;  
Add perjury to fraud, and make it thine—’  
Then to his steeds with all his force he cries,  
‘ Be swift, be vigorous, and regain the prize!  
Your rivals, destitute of youthful force,  
With fainting knees shall labour in the course,  
And yield the glory yours’—The steeds obey;  
Already at their heels they wing their way,  
And seem already to retrieve the day.

Meantime the Grecians in a ring beheld  
The coursers bounding o'er the dusty field.  
The first who mark'd them was the Cretan king;  
High on a rising ground, above the ring,  
The monarch sat: from whence with sure survey  
He well observed the chief who led the way,  
And heard from far his animating cries,  
And saw the foremost steed with sharpen'd eyes;  
On whose broad front a blaze of shining white,  
Like the full moon, stood obvious to the sight.  
He saw; and, rising, to the Greeks begun:  
‘ Are yonder horse discern'd by me alone?  
Or can ye, all, another chief survey,  
And other steeds, than lately led the way?  
Those, though the swiftest, by some god withheld,  
Lie sure disabled in the middle field:  
For, since the goal they doubled, round the plain  
I search to find them, but I search in vain.

Perchance the reins forsook the driver's hand,  
And, turn'd too short, he tumbled on the strand,  
Shot from the chariot; while his coursers stray  
With frantic fury from the destined way.

Rise then some other, and inform my sight,  
For these dim eyes, perhaps, discern not right,  
Yet sure he seems, to judge by shape and air,  
The great Ætolian chief, renown'd in war.'

‘ Old man! (Oileus rashly thus replies)  
Thy tongue too hastily confers the prize;  
Of those who view the course, not sharpest eyed,  
Nor youngest, yet the readiest to decide.  
Eumelus' steeds, high-bounding in the chase,  
Still, as at first, unrival'd lead the race:  
I well discern him as he shakes the rein,  
And hear his shouts victorious o'er the plain.’

Thus he. Idomeneus, incensed, rejoin'd:  
‘ Barbarous of words! and arrogant of mind!  
Contentious prince, of all the Greeks beside  
The last in merit, as the first in pride!  
To vile reproach what answer can we make?  
A goblet or a tripod let us stake,  
And be the king the judge. The most unwise  
Will learn their rashness when they pay the price.’

He said: and Ajax, by mad passion borne,  
Stern had replied; fierce scorn enhaneing scorn  
To fell extremes. But Thetis' godlike son  
Awful amidst them rose, and thus begun—

‘ Forbear, ye chiefs! reproachful to contend;  
Much would ye blame, should others thus offend:  
And lo! the' approaching steeds your contest end.  
No sooner had he spoke, but thundering near,  
Drives, through a stream of dust, the charioteer.  
High o'er his head the circling lash he wields:  
His bounding horses scarcely touch the fields:

His car amidst the dusty whirlwind roll'd,  
Bright with the mingled blaze of tin and gold,  
Refulgent through the cloud: no eye could find  
The track his flying wheels had left behind:  
And the fierce coursers urged their rapid pace  
So swift, it seem'd a flight, and not a race.  
Now victor at the goal Tydides stands,  
Quits his bright car, and springs upon the sands;  
From the hot steeds the sweaty torrents stream;  
The well-plied whip is hung athwart the beam:  
With joy brave Sthenelus receives the prize,  
The tripod-vase, and dame with radiant eyes:  
These to the ships his train triumphant leads,  
The chief himself unyokes the panting steeds.

Young Nestor follows (who by art, not force,  
O'erpass'd Atrides) second in the course.  
Behind, Atrides urged the race, more near  
Than to the courser in his swift career  
The following car, just touching with his heel  
And brushing with his tail the whirling wheel:  
Such, and so narrow now the space between  
The rivals, late so distant on the green;  
So soon swift *Æthè* her lost ground regain'd,  
One length, one moment, had the race obtain'd.

Merion pursued, at greater distance still,  
With tardier coursers, and inferior skill.  
Last came, Admetus! thy unhappy son;  
Slow dragg'd the steeds his batter'd chariot on:  
Achilles saw, and pitying thus begun—

‘Behold! the man whose matchless art surpass'd  
The sons of Greece! the ablest, yet the last!  
Fortune denies, but justice bids us pay  
(Since great Tydides bears the first away)  
To him the second honours of the day.’

The Greeks consent with loud applauding cries,  
And then Eumelus had received the prize;  
But youthful Nestor, jealous of his fame,  
The' award opposes, and asserts his claim.  
‘ Think not (he cries) I tamely will resign,  
O Peleus' son! the mare so justly mine.  
What if the gods, the skilful to confound,  
Have thrown the horse and horseman to the  
ground?’

Perhaps he sought not Heaven by sacrifice,  
And vows omitted forfeited the prize.  
If yet (distinction to thy friend to show,  
And please a soul desirous to bestow)  
Some gift must grace Eumelus, view thy store  
Of beauteous handmaids, steeds, and shining ore,  
An ample present let him thence receive,  
And Greece shall praise thy generous thirst to give.  
But this my prize I never shall forego;  
This, who but touches, warriors! is my foe.’

Thus spake the youth; nor did his words offend:  
Pleased with the well-turn'd flattery of a friend,  
Achilles smiled: ‘ The gift proposed (he cried)  
Antilochus! we shall ourself provide.  
With plates of brass the corselet cover'd o'er,  
(The same renown'd Asteropæus wore)  
Whose glittering margins raised with silver shine,  
(No vulgar gift) Eumelus! shall be thine.’

He said: Automedon at his command  
The corselet brought, and gave it to his hand.  
Distinguish'd by his friend, his bosom glows  
With generous joy: then Menelaüs rose;  
The herald placed the sceptre in his hands,  
And still'd the clamour of the shouting bands.

Not without cause incensed at Nestor's son,  
And inly grieving, thus the king begun—

‘ The praise of wisdom in thy youth obtain'd,  
An act so rash, Antilochus! has stain'd.  
Robb'd of my glory and my just reward,  
To you, O Grecians! be my wrong declared:  
So not a leader shall our conduct blame,  
Or judge me envious of a rival's fame.  
But shall not we, ourselves, the truth maintain?  
What needs appealing in a fact so plain?  
What Greek shall blame me, if I bid thee rise,  
And vindicate by oath the ill-gotten prize?  
Rise, if thou darest, before thy chariot stand,  
The driving scourge high lifted in thy hand;  
And touch thy steeds, and swear thy whole intent  
Was but to conquer, not to circumvent.  
Swear by that god whose liquid arms surround  
The globe, and whose dread earthquakes heave  
the ground!'

The prudent chief with calm attention heard;  
Then mildly thus—‘ Excuse, if youth have err'd;  
Superior as thou art, forgive the offence,  
Nor I thy equal, or in years, or sense.  
Thou know'st the errors of unripen'd age,  
Weak are its counsels, headlong is its rage.  
The prize I quit, if thou thy wrath resign;  
The mare, or aught thou ask'st, be freely thine:  
Ere I become (from thy dear friendship torn)  
Hateful to thee, and to the gods forsown.’

So spoke Antilochus; and at the word  
The mare contested to the king restored.  
Joy swells his soul: as when the vernal grain  
Lifts the green ear above the springing plain,

The fields their vegetable life renew,  
And laugh and glitter with the morning dew ;  
Such joy the Spartan's shining face o'erspread,  
And lifted his gay heart, while thus he said—

‘ Still may our souls, O generous youth ! agree,  
‘ Tis now Atrides' turn to yield to thee.  
Rash heat perhaps a moment might control,  
Not break, the settled temper of thy soul.  
Not but (my friend) 'tis still the wisest way  
To wave contention with superior sway ;  
For ah ! how few, who should like thee offend,  
Like thee, have talents to regain the friend ?  
To plead indulgence, and thy fault atone,  
Suffice thy father's merit and thy own :  
Generous alike, for me, the sire and son  
Have greatly suffer'd, and have greatly done.  
I yield ; that all may know, my soul can bend,  
Nor is my pride preferr'd before my friend.’

He said ; and, pleased his passion to command,  
Resign'd the courser to Noëmon's hand,  
Friend of the youthful chief : himself content,  
The shining charger to his vessel sent.  
The golden talents Merion next obtain'd ;  
The fifth reward, the double bowl, remain'd.  
Achilles this to reverend Nestor bears,  
And thus the purpose of his gift declares—  
‘ Accept thou this, O sacred sire ! (he said)  
In dear memorial of Patroclus dead ;  
Dead, and for ever lost, Patroclus lies,  
For ever snatch'd from our desiring eyes !  
Take thou this token of a grateful heart,  
Though 'tis not thine to hurl the distant dart,  
The quoit to toss, the ponderous mace to wield,  
Or urge the race, or wrestle on the field :

Thy pristine vigour age has overthrown,  
But left the glory of the past thy own.'

He said, and placed the goblet at his side;  
With joy the venerable king replied :

' Wisely and well, my son, thy words have proved  
A senior honour'd, and a friend beloved !  
Too true it is, deserted of my strength,  
These wither'd arms and limbs have fail'd at length.  
Oh ! had I now that force I felt of yore,  
Known through Buprasium and the Pylian shore !  
Victorious then in every solemn game,  
Ordain'd to Amarynces' mighty name ;  
The brave Epeians gave my glory way,  
Ætolians, Pylians, all resign the day.  
I quell'd Clytomedes in fights of hand,  
And backward hurl'd Ancaeus on the sand,  
Surpass'd Iphyclus in the swift career,  
Phyleus and Polydorus, with the spear.  
The sons of Actor won the prize of horse,  
But won by numbers, not by art or force :  
For the famed twins, impatient to survey  
Prize after prize by Nestor borne away,  
Sprung to their car ; and with united pains  
One lash'd the coursers, while one ruled the reins.  
Such once I was ! Now to these tasks succeeds  
A younger race, that emulate our deeds :  
I yield, alas ! (to age who must not yield ?)  
Though once the foremost hero of the field.  
Go thou, my son ! by generous friendship led,  
With martial honours decorate the dead ;  
While pleased I take the gift thy hands present  
(Pledge of benevolence, and kind intent) ;  
Rejoiced, of all the numerous Greeks, to see  
Not one but honours sacred age and me ;

Those due distinctions thou so well canst pay,  
May the just gods return another day!'

Proud of the gift, thus spake the full of days:  
Achilles heard him, prouder of the praise.

The prizes next are order'd to the field,  
For the bold champions who the cæstus wield.  
A stately mule, as yet by toils unbroke,  
Of six years age, unconscious of the yoke,  
Is to the circus led, and firmly bound;  
Next stands a goblet, massy, large, and round.  
Achilles rising thus—‘ Let Greece excite  
Two heroes equal to this hardy fight;  
Who dare the foe with lifted arms provoke,  
And rush beneath the long descending stroke.  
On whom Apollo shall the palm bestow,  
And whom the Greeks supreme by conquest know,  
This mule his dauntless labours shall repay;  
The vanquish'd bear the massy bowl away.’

This dreadful combat great Epëus chose;  
High o'er the crowd, enormous bulk! he rose,  
And seized the beast, and thus began to say—  
‘ Stand forth some man, to bear the bowl away!  
(Price of his ruin) for who dares deny  
This mule my right; the’ undoubted victor I?  
Others, ’tis own’d, in fields of battle shine,  
But the first honours of this fight are mine;  
For who excells in all? Then let my foe  
Draw near, but first his certain fortune know;  
Secure this hand shall his whole frame confound,  
Mash all his bones, and all his body pound:  
So let his friends be nigh, a needful train,  
To heave the batter’d carcass off the plain.’

The giant spoke; and in a stupid gaze  
The host beheld him, silent with amaze!

"Twas thou, Euryalus! who durst aspire  
To meet his might, and emulate thy sire,  
The great Mecistheus; who in days of yore  
In Theban games the noblest trophy bore  
(The games ordain'd dead Oedipus to grace),  
And singly vanquish'd the Cadmæan race.  
Him great Tydides urges to contend,  
Warm with the hopes of conquest for his friend;  
Officious with the cineture girds him round;  
And to his wrist the gloves of death are bound.  
Amid the circle now each champion stands,  
And poises high in air his iron hands;  
With clashing gauntlets now they fiercely close,  
Their crackling jaws reecho to the blows,  
And painful sweat from all their members flows.  
At length Epëus dealt a weighty blow  
Full on the cheek of his unwary foe;  
Beneath that ponderous arm's resistless sway  
Down dropp'd he, nerveless, and extended lay.  
As a large fish, when winds and waters roar,  
By some huge billow dash'd against the shore,  
Lies panting; not less batter'd with his wound,  
The bleeding hero pants upon the ground.  
To rear his fallen foe, the victor lends,  
Scornful, his hand; and gives him to his friends;  
Whose arms support him, reeling through the  
throng,  
And dragging his disabled legs along;  
Nodding, his head hangs down his shoulder o'er;  
His mouth and nostrils pour the clotted gore;  
Wrapp'd round in mists he lies, and lost to thought;  
His friends receive the bowl, too dearly bought.  
The third bold game Achilles next demands,  
And calls the wrestlers to the level sands:

A massy tripod for the victor lies,  
Of twice six oxen its reputed price;  
And next, the loser's spirits to restore,  
A female captive, valued but at four.  
Scarce did the chief the vigorous strife propose,  
When tower-like Ajax and Ulysses rose.  
Amid the ring each nervous rival stands,  
Embracing rigid with implicit hands :  
Close lock'd above, their heads and arms are mix'd;  
Below, their planted feet at distance fix'd :  
Like two strong rafters which the builder forms,  
Proof to the wintry wind and howling storms,  
Their tops connected, but at wider space  
Fix'd on the centre stands their solid base.  
Now to the grasp each manly body bends;  
The humid sweat from every pore descends ;  
Their bones resound with blows : sides, shoulders,  
thighs,

Swell to each gripe, and bloody tumours rise.  
Nor could Ulysses, for his art renown'd,  
O'erturn the strength of Ajax on the ground ;  
Nor could the strength of Ajax overthrow  
The watchful caution of his artful foe.  
While the long strife e'en tired the lookers on,  
Thus to Ulysses spoke great Telamon :  
' Or let me lift thee, chief, or lift thou me :  
Prove we our force, and Jove the rest decree.'

He said; and, straining heaved him off the  
ground

With matchless strength ; that time Ulysses found  
The strength to' evade, and where the nerves com-  
His ankle struck : the giant fell supine ; [bine  
Ulysses, following, on his bosom lies ;  
Shouts of applause run rattling through the skies.

Ajax to lift, Ulysses next essays,  
He barely stirr'd him, but he could not raise :  
His knee lock'd fast, the foe's attempt denied ;  
And grappling close, they tumbled side by side.  
Defiled with honourable dust they roll,  
Still breathing strife, and unsubdued of soul :  
Again they rage, again to combat rise ;  
When great Achilles thus divides the prize—

‘ Your noble vigour, O my friends, restrain ;  
Nor weary out your generous strength in vain.  
Ye both have won : let others who excel,  
Now prove that prowess you have proved so well.’

The hero's words the willing chiefs obey,  
From their tired bodies wipe the dust away,  
And, clothed anew, the following games survey.

And now succeeds the gifts ordain'd to grace  
The youths contending in the rapid race :  
A silver urn that full six measures held,  
By none in weight or workmanship excell'd :  
Sidonian artists taught the frame to shine,  
Elaborate, with artifice divine ;  
Whence Tyrian sailors did the prize transport,  
And gave to Thoäs at the Lemnian port :  
From him descended, good Eunæus heir'd  
The glorious gift ; and, for Lyeaon spared,  
To brave Patroclus gave the rich reward :  
Now, the same hero's funeral rites to grace,  
It stands the prize of swiftness in the race.  
A well-fed ox was for the second placed ;  
And half a talent must content the last.  
Achilles rising then bespoke the train—  
‘ Who hope the palm of swiftness to obtain,  
Stand forth, and bear these prizes from the plain.’

The hero said, and, starting from his place,  
Oilean Ajax rises to the race ;

Ulysses next; and he whose speed surpass'd  
His youthful equals, Nestor's son, the last.  
Ranged in a line the ready racers stand;  
Pelides points the barrier with his hand;  
All start at once; Oileus led the race;  
The next Ulysses, measuring pace with pace;  
Behind him, diligently close, he sped,  
As closely following as the running thread  
The spindle follows, and displays the charms  
Of the fair spinster's breast and moving arms:  
Graceful in motion thus, his foe he plies,  
And treads each footstep ere the dust can rise;  
His glowing breath upon his shoulders plays:  
The admiring Greeks loud acclamations raise,  
To him they give their wishes, hearts, and eyes,  
And send their souls before him as he flies.  
Now three times turn'd in prospect of the goal,  
The panting chief to Pallas lifts his soul:  
'Assist, O goddess!' thus in thought he pray'd;  
And present at his thought descends the maid.  
Buoy'd by her heavenly force, he seems to swim,  
And feels a pinion lifting every limb.  
All fiercee, and ready now the prize to gain,  
Unhappy Ajax stumbles on the plain;  
(O'erturn'd by Pallas) where the slippery shore  
Was clogg'd with slimy dung and mingled gore  
(The selfsame place, beside Patroclus' pyre,  
Where late the slaughter'd victims fed the fire):  
Besmear'd with filth, and blotted o'er with clay,  
Obscene to sight, the rneful raeer lay;  
The well-fed bull (the second prize) he shared,  
And left the urn Ulysses' rich reward.  
Then, grasping by the horn the mighty beast,  
The baffled hero thus the Greeks address'd—

‘ Accursed Fate! the conquest I forego ;  
 A mortal I, a goddess was my foe ;  
 She urged her favourite on the rapid way,  
 And Pallas, not Ulysses, won the day.’

Thus sourly wail’d he, sputtering dirt and gore ;  
 A burst of laughter echoed through the shore.  
 Antilochus, more humorous than the rest,  
 Takes the last prize, and takes it with a jest :

‘ Why with our wiser elders should we strive ?  
 The gods still love them, and they always thrive.  
 Ye see, to Ajax I must yield the prize :  
 He to Ulysses, still more aged and wise ;  
 (A green old age unconscious of decays,  
 That proves the hero born in better days !)  
 Behold his vigour in this active race !  
 Achilles only boasts a swifter pace :  
 For who can match Achilles ! He who can,  
 Must yet be more than hero, more than man.’

The’ effect succeeds the speech. Pelides cries,  
 ‘ Thy artful praise deserves a better prize.  
 Not Greece in vain shall hear thy friend extoll’d ;  
 Receive a talent of the purest gold.’  
 The youth departs content. The host admire  
 The son of Nestor, worthy of his sire. [brings ;

Next these a buckler, spear, and helm, he  
 Cast on the plain, the brazen burden rings :  
 Arms, which of late divine Sarpedon wore,  
 And great Patroclus in short triumph bore.

‘ Stand forth the bravest of our host ! (he cries)  
 Whoever dares deserve so rich a prize,  
 Now grace the lists before our army’s sight,  
 And sheath’d in steel, provoke his foe to fight.  
 Who first the jointed armour shall explore,  
 And stain his rival’s mail with issuing gore,

The sword, Asteropaeus possess'd of old  
(A Thracian blade, distinct with studs of gold),  
Shall pay the stroke, and grace the striker's side :  
These arms in common let the chiefs divide :  
For each brave champion, when the combat ends,  
A sumptuous banquet at our tent attends.'

Fierce at the word, uprose great Tydeus' son,  
And the huge bulk of Ajax Telamon.  
Clad in resplendent steel, on either hand,  
The dreadful chiefs amid the circles stand ;  
Louring they meet, tremendous to the sight :  
Each Argive bosom beats with fierce delight.  
Opposed in arms not long they idly stood,  
But thrice they closed, and thrice the charge re-  
A furious pass the spear of Ajax made [new'd.  
Through the broad shield, but at the corslet stay'd.  
Not thus the foe : his javelin aim'd above  
The buckler's margin, at the neck he drove.  
But Greece, now trembling for her hero's life,  
Bade share the honours, and surcease the strife.  
Yet still the victor's due Tydides gains,  
With him the sword and studded belt remains.

Then hurl'd the hero, thundering on the ground,  
A mass of iron (an enormous round),  
Whose weight and size the circling Greeks admire,  
Rude from the furnace, and but shaped by fire.  
This mighty quoit Aëtion wont to rear,  
And from his whirling arm dismiss in air :  
The giant by Achilles slain, he stow'd  
Among his spoils this memorable load.  
For this, he bids those nervous artists vie  
That teach the disk to sound along the sky.  
' Let him, whose might can hurl this bowl, arise ;  
Who furthest burls it, take it as his prize :

If he be one enrich'd with large domain  
 Of downs for flocks, and arable for grain,  
 Small stock of iron needs that man provide ;  
 His hinds and swains whole years shall be supplied  
 From hence ; nor ask the neighbouring city's aid  
 For ploughshares, wheels, and all the rural trade.'

Stern Polypetes stepp'd before the throng,  
 And great Leonteus, more than mortal strong ;  
 Whose force with rival forces to oppose,  
 Uprose great Ajax ; up Epēus rose.  
 Each stood in order : first Epēus threw ;  
 High o'er the wondering crowds the whirling eir-  
 Leonteus next a little space surpass'd ; [cle flew.  
 And third, the strength of godlike Ajax cast.  
 O'er both their marks it flew ; till fiercely flung  
 From Polypetes' arm the diseus sung :  
 Far as a swain his whirling sheephook throws,  
 That distant falls among the grazing cows,  
 So past them all the rapid circle flies :  
 His friends, while loud applauses shake the skies,  
 With force conjoin'd heave off the weighty prize.

Those, who in skilful archery contend,  
 He next invites the twanging bow to bend :  
 And twice ten axes casts amidst the round,  
 Ten double-edged, and ten that singly wound.  
 The mast, which late a firstrate galley bore,  
 The hero fixes in the sandy shore :  
 To the tall top a milkwhite dove they tie,  
 The trembling mark at which their arrows fly.  
 ' Whose weapon strikes yon fluttering bird, shall  
 These twoedged axes, terrible in war ; [bear  
 The single, he whose shaft divides the cord.'  
 He said : experienced Merion took the word ;  
 And skilful Teueer : in the helm they threw  
 Their lots inscribed, and forth the latter flew.

Swift from the string the sounding arrow flies ;  
But flies unbless'd ! No grateful sacrifice,  
No firstling lambs, unheedful ! didst thou vow  
To Phœbus, patron of the shaft and bow.  
For this, thy well-aim'd arrow, turn'd aside,  
Err'd from the dove, yet cut the cord that tied :  
Adown the mainmast fell the parted string,  
And the free bird to heaven displays her wing :  
Seas, shores, and skies, with loud applause re-  
And Merion eager meditates the wound : [sound,  
He takes the bow, directs the shaft above,  
And following with his eye the soaring dove,  
Implores the god to speed it through the skies,  
With vows of firstling lambs, and grateful sacrifice.  
The dove, in airy circles as she wheels  
Amid the clouds, the piercing arrow feels ;  
Quite through and through the point its passage  
found,  
And at his feet fell bloody to the ground.  
The wounded bird, ere yet she breathed her last,  
With flagging wings alighted on the mast,  
A moment hung, and spread her pinions there,  
Then sudden dropp'd, and left her life in air.  
From the pleased crowd new peals of thunder rise,  
And to the ships brave Merion bears the prize.  
To close the funeral games, Achilles last  
A massy spear amid the circle placed,  
And ample charger of unsullied frame,  
With flowers high-wrought, not blacken'd yet  
by flame.  
For these he bids the heroes prove their art,  
Whose dexterous skill directs the flying dart.  
Here too great Merion hopes the noble prize :  
Nor here disdain'd the king of men to rise.

With joy Pelides saw the honour paid,  
Rose to the monarch, and respectful said—

‘ Thee first in virtue, as in power supreme,  
O king of nations! all thy Greeks proclaim;  
In every martial game thy worth attest,  
And know thee both their greatest and their best.  
Take then the prize, but let brave Merion bear  
This beamy javelin in thy brother’s war.’

Pleased from the hero’s lips his praise to hear,  
The king to Merion gives the brazen spear:  
But, set apart for sacred use, commands  
The glittering charger to Talthybius’ hands.

## BOOK XXIV.

## The Argument.

## THE REDEMPTION OF THE BODY OF HECTOR.

The gods deliberate about the redemption of Hector's body. Jupiter sends Thetis to Achilles, to dispose him for the restoring it, and Iris to Priam, to encourage him to go in person, and treat for it. The old king, notwithstanding the remonstrances of his queen, makes ready for the journey, to which he is encouraged by an omen from Jupiter. He sets forth in his chariot, with a waggon loaded with presents under the charge of Idæus the herald. Mercury descends in the shape of a young man, and conducts him to the pavilion of Achilles. Their conversation on the way. Priam finds Achilles at his table, casts himself at his feet, and begs for the body of his son: Achilles, moved with compassion, grants his request, detains him one night in his tent, and the next morning sends him home with the body: the Trojans run out to meet him. The lamentations of Andromache, Hecuba, and Helen, with the solemnities of the funeral.

The time of twelve days is employed in this book, while the body of Hector lies in the tent of Achilles. And as many more are spent in the truce allowed for his interment. The scene is partly in Achilles' camp, and partly in Troy.

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Now from the finish'd games the Grecian band  
Seek their black ships, and clear the crowded  
strand;

All stretch'd at ease the genial banquet share,  
And pleasing slumbers quiet all their care.  
Not so Achilles: he, to grief resign'd,  
His friend's dear image present to his mind,  
Takes his sad couch, more unobserved to weep;  
Nor tastes the gifts of all-composing sleep.  
Restless he roll'd around his weary bed,  
And all his soul on his Patroclus fed:

The form so pleasing, and the heart so kind,  
That youthful vigour, and that manly mind,  
What toils they shared, what martial works they  
wrought, [fought ;  
What seas they measured, and what fields they  
All pass'd before him in remembrance dear,  
Thought follows thought, and tear succeeds to tear.  
And now supine, now prone, the hero lay,  
Now shifts his side, impatient for the day :  
Then starting up, disconsolate he goes  
Wide on the lonely beach to vent his woes.  
There as the solitary mourner raves,  
The ruddy morning rises o'er the waves :  
Soon as it rose, his furious steeds he join'd ;  
The chariot flies, and Hector trails behind.  
And thrice, Patroclus ! round thy monument  
Was Hector dragg'd, then hurried to the tent.  
There sleep at last o'ercomes the hero's eyes ;  
While foul in dust the' unhonour'd carcass lies,  
But not deserted by the pitying skies :  
For Phœbus watch'd it with superior care,  
Preserved from gaping wounds and tainting air ;  
And, ignominious as it swept the field,  
Spread o'er the sacred corpse his brazen shield.  
All Heaven was moved, and Hermes will'd to go  
By stealth to snatch him from the' insulting foe :  
But Neptune this, and Pallas this denies,  
And the' unrelenting empress of the skies ;  
E'er since that day implacable to Troy,  
What time young Paris, simple shepherd boy,  
Won by destructive lust (reward obscene),  
Their charms rejected for the Cyprian queen.  
But when the tenth celestial morning broke,  
To Heaven assembled, thus Apollo spoke—

‘ Unpitying powers! how oft each holy fane  
Has Hector tinged with blood of victims slain!  
And can ye still his cold remains pursue?  
Still grudge his body to the Trojans’ view?  
Deny to consort, mother, son, and sire,  
The last sad honours of a funeral fire?  
Is then the dire Achilles all your care?  
That iron heart, inflexibly severe;  
A lion, not a man, who slaughters wide,  
In strength of rage, and impotence of pride;  
Who hastes to murder with a savage joy,  
Invades around, and breathes but to destroy?  
Shame is not of his soul; nor understood,  
The greatest evil, and the greatest good.  
Still for one loss he rages unresign’d,  
Repugnant to the lot of all mankind;  
To lose a friend, a brother, or a son,  
Heaven dooms each mortal, and its will is done:  
A while they sorrow, then dismiss their care;  
Fate gives the wound, and man is born to bear.  
But this, insatiate, the commission given  
By Fate exceeds, and tempts the wrath of Heaven:  
Lo how his rage dishonest drags along  
Hector’s dead earth, insensible of wrong!  
Brave though he be, yet by no reason awed,  
He violates the laws of man and god.’

‘ If equal honours by the partial skies  
Are doom’d both heroes (Juno thus replies),  
If Thetis’ son must no distinction know,  
Then hear, ye gods! the patron of the bow.  
But Hector only boasts a mortal claim,  
His birth deriving from a mortal dame;  
Achilles, of your own ethereal race,  
Springs from a goddess by a man’s embrace

(A goddess by ourself to Peleus given,  
 A man divine, and chosen friend of Heaven).  
 To grace those nuptials, from the bright abode,  
 Yourselves were present; where this minstrel-god,  
 Well pleased to share the feast, amid the quire  
 Stood proud to hymn, and tune his youthful lyre.'

Then thus the thunderer checks the' imperial  
 dame :

' Let not thy wrath the court of heaven inflame;  
 Their merits, not their honours, are the same.  
 But mine, and every god's peculiar grace  
 Hector deserves, of all the Trojan race :  
 Still on our shrines his grateful offerings lay  
 (The only honours men to gods can pay),  
 Nor ever from our smoking altar ceased  
 The pure libation, and the holy feast.  
 Howe'er by stealth to snatch the corpse away,  
 We will not: Thetis guards it night and day.  
 But haste, and summon to our courts above  
 The azure queen; let her persuasion move  
 Her furious son from Priam to receive  
 The proffer'd ransom, and the corpse to leave.'

He added not: and Iris from the skies,  
 Swift as a whirlwind, on the message flies,  
 Meteorous the face of ocean sweeps,  
 Refulgent gliding o'er the sable deeps,  
 Between where Samos wide his forests spreads,  
 And rocky Imbrus lifts its pointed heads.  
 Down plunged the maid (the parted waves re-  
 sound),  
 She plunged, and instant shot the dark profound.  
 As, bearing death in the fallacious bait,  
 From the bent angle sinks the leaden weight;  
 So pass'd the goddess through the closing wave,  
 Where Thetis sorrow'd in her secret cave:

There placed amidst her melancholy train  
(The blue-hair'd sisters of the sacred main)  
Pensive she sat, revolving fates to come,  
And wept her godlike son's approaching doom.  
Then thus the goddess of the painted bow—  
'Arise! O Thetis, from thy seats below,  
'Tis Jove that calls.'—'And why (the dame replies)  
Calls Jove his Thetis to the hated skies?  
Sad object as I am for heavenly sight!  
Ah may my sorrows ever shun the light!  
Howe'er, be heaven's almighty sire obey'd—'  
She spake, and veil'd her head in sable shade,  
Which, flowing long, her graceful person clad;  
And forth she paced, majestically sad.

Then through the world of waters they repair  
(The way fair Iris led) to upper air.  
The deeps dividing, o'er the coast they rise,  
And touch with momentary flight the skies.  
There in the lightning's blaze the sire they found,  
And all the gods in shining synod round.  
Thetis approach'd with anguish in her face,  
(Minerva rising, gave the mourner place)  
E'en Juno sought her sorrows to console,  
And offer'd from her hand the nectar-bowl:  
She tasted, and resign'd it: then began  
The sacred sire of gods and mortal man:

'Thou comest, fair Thetis, but with grief o'ercast;  
Maternal sorrows; long, ah, long to last!  
Suffice, we know and we partake thy cares;  
But yield to Fate, and hear what Jove declares:  
Nine days are pass'd since all the court above  
In Hector's cause have moved the ear of Jove;  
'Twas voted, Hermes from his godlike foe  
By stealth would bear him, but we will'd not so:

We will, thy son himself the corse restore,  
 And to his conquest add this glory more.  
 Then hie thee to him, and our mandate bear :  
 Tell him he tempts the wrath of Heaven too far ;  
 Nor let him more (our anger if he dread)  
 Vent his mad vengeance on the sacred dead ;  
 But yield to ransom and the father's prayer.  
 The mournful father, Iris shall prepare  
 With gifts to sue ; and offer to his hands  
 Whate'er his honour asks, or heart demands.'

His word the silver-footed queen attends,  
 And from Olympus' snowy tops descends.  
 Arrived, she heard the voice of loud lament,  
 And echoing groans that shook the lofty tent :  
 His friends prepare the victim, and dispose  
 Repast unheeded, while he vents his woes ;  
 The goddess seats her by her pensive son,  
 She press'd his hand, and tender thus begun—

‘ How long, unhappy ! shall thy sorrows flow,  
 And thy heart waste with life-consuming woe :  
 Mindless of food, or love, whose pleasing reign  
 Soothes weary life, and softens human pain ?  
 O snatch the moments yet within thy power ;  
 Not long to live, indulge the amorous hour !  
 Lo ! Jove himself (for Jove's command I bear)  
 Forbids to tempt the wrath of Heaven too far.  
 No longer then (his fury if thou dread)  
 Detain the reliques of great Hector dead ;  
 Nor vent on senseless earth thy vengeance vain ;  
 But yield to ransom, and restore the slain.’

To whom Achilles—‘ Be the ransom given,  
 And we submit, since such the will of Heaven.’

While thus they communed, from the Olympian  
 Jove orders Iris to the Trojan towers : [bowers

‘ Haste, winged goddess! to the sacred town,  
And urge her monarch to redeem his son;  
Alone, the Ilian ramparts let him leave,  
And bear what stern Achilles may receive:  
Alone, for so we will: no Trojan near;  
Except, to place the dead with decent care,  
Some aged herald, who with gentle hand  
May the slow mules, and funeral car command.  
Nor let him death, nor let him danger, dread;  
Safe through the foe by our protection led:  
Him Hermes to Achilles shall convey,  
Guard of his life, and partner of his way.  
Fierce as he is, Achilles’ self shall spare  
His age, nor touch one venerable hair:  
Some thought there must be in a soul so brave,  
Some sense of duty, some desire to save.’

Then down her bow the winged Iris drives,  
And swift at Priam’s mournful court arrives:  
Where the sad sons beside their father’s throne  
Sat bathed in tears, and answer’d groan with groan.  
And all amidst them lay the hoary sire,  
(Sad scene of woe!) his face, his wrapp’d attire,  
Conceal’d from sight; with frantic hands he spread  
A shower of ashes o’er his neck and head.  
From room to room his pensive daughters roam;  
Whose shrieks and clamours fill the vaulted dome;  
Mindful of those, who, late their pride and joy,  
Lie pale and breathless round the fields of Troy!  
Before the king Jove’s messenger appears,  
And thus in whispers greets his trembling ears—

‘ Fear not, O father! no ill news I bear;  
From Jove I come, Jove makes thee still his care:  
For Hector’s sake these walls he bids thee leave,  
And bear what stern Achilles may receive;

Alone, for so he wills : no Trojan near,  
Except, to place the dead with decent care,  
Some aged herald, who with gentle hand  
May the slow mules and funeral car command.  
Nor shalt thou death, nor shalt thou danger,dread;  
Safe through the foe by his protection led ;  
Thee Hermes to Pelides shall convey,  
Guard of thy life, and partner of thy way.  
Fierce as he is, Achilles' self shall spare  
Thy age, nor touch one venerable hair ;  
Some thought there must be in a soul so brave,  
Some sense of duty, some desire to save.'

She spoke, and vanish'd. Priam bids prepare  
His gentle mules and harness to the car ;  
There, for the gifts, a polish'd casket lay :  
His pious sons the king's command obey.  
Then pass'd the monarch to his bridal room,  
Where cedar-beams the lofty roofs perfume,  
And where the treasures of his empire lay ;  
. Then call'd his queen, and thus began to say—

‘ Unhappy consort of a king distress'd !  
Partake the troubles of thy husband's breast :  
I saw descend the messenger of Jove,  
Who bids me try Achilles' mind to move ;  
Forsake these ramparts, and with gifts obtain  
The corpse of Hector, at yon navy slain.  
Tell me thy thought : my heart impels to go  
Through hostile camps, and bears me to the foe.’

The hoary monarch thus. Her piercing cries  
Sad Hecuba renews, and then replies—  
‘ Ah ! whither wanders thy distemper'd mind ?  
And where the prudence now that awed mankind ;  
Through Phrygia once and foreign regions known ;  
Now all confused, distracted, overthrown ?

Singly to pass through hosts of foes! to face  
(O heart of steel!) the murderer of thy race!  
To view that deathful eye, and wander o'er  
Those hands, yet red with Hector's noble gore!  
Alas! my lord! he knows not how to spare,  
And what his mercy, thy slain sons declare;  
So brave! so many fallen! To calm his rage  
Vain were thy dignity, and vain thy age.  
No——pent in this sad palace, let us give  
To grief the wretched days we have to live.  
Still, still for Hector let our sorrows flow,  
Born to his own, and to his parents' woe!  
Doom'd from the hour his luckless life begun,  
To dogs, to vultures, and to Peleus' son!  
Oh! in his dearest blood might I allay  
My rage, and these barbarities repay!  
For ah! could Hector merit thus, whose breath  
Expired not meanly in unactive death?  
He pour'd his latest blood in manly fight,  
And fell a hero in his country's right.'

‘ Seek not to stay me, nor my soul affright  
With words of omen, like a bird of night  
(Replied unmoved the venerable man);  
‘Tis Heaven commands me, and you urge in vain.  
Had any mortal voicee the’ injunetion laid,  
Nor augur, priest, nor seer had been obey’d.  
A present goddess brought the high command,  
I saw, I heard her, and the word shall stand.  
I go, ye gods! obedient to your call:  
If in yon camp your powers have doom’d my fall,  
Content—By the same hand let me expire!  
Add to the slaughter’d son the wretched sire!  
One cold embrace at least may be allow’d,  
And my last tears flow mingled with his blood!’

From forth his open'd stores, this said, he drew  
Twelve costly carpets of refulgent hue,  
As many vests, as many mantles told,  
And twelve fair veils, and garments stiff with gold.  
Two tripods next, and twice two chargers shine,  
With ten pure talents from the richest mine;  
And last a large well-labour'd bowl had place  
(The pledge of treaties once with friendly Thrace):  
Seem'd all too mean the stores he could employ,  
For one last look to buy him back to Troy!

Lo! the sad father, frantic with his pain,  
Around him furious drives his menial train:  
In vain each slave with duteous care attends,  
Each office hurts him, and each face offends.  
'What make ye here? officious crowds! (he cries)  
Hence! nor intrude your anguish on my eyes.  
Have ye no griefs at home, to fix ye there?  
Am I the only object of despair?  
Am I become my people's common show,  
Set up by Jove your spectacle of woe?  
No, you must feel him too; yourselves must fall;  
The same stern god to ruin gives you all:  
Nor is great Hector lost by me alone;  
Your sole defence, your guardian power, is gone!  
I see your blood the fields of Phrygia drown,  
I see the ruins of your smoking town!  
O send me, gods! ere that sad day shall come,  
A willing ghost to Pluto's dreary dome!'

He said, and feebly drives his friends away:  
The sorrowing friends his frantic rage obey.  
Next on his sons his erring fury falls,  
Polites, Paris, Agathon, he calls,  
His threats Deiphobus and Dius hear,  
Hippothoüs, Pammon, Helenus the seer,

And generous Antiphon: for yet these nine  
Survived, sad reliques of his numerous line.

‘ Inglorious sons of an unhappy sire!  
Why did not all in Hector’s cause expire?  
Wretch that I am! my bravest offspring slain,  
You, the disgrace of Priam’s house, remain!  
Mestor the brave, renown’d in ranks of war,  
With Troilus, dreadful on his rushing car,  
And last great Hector, more than man divine,  
For sure he seem’d not of terrestrial line!  
All those relentless Mars untimely slew,  
And left me these, a soft and servile crew,  
Whose days the feast and wanton dance employ,  
Gluttons and flatterers, the contempt of Troy!  
Why teach ye not my rapid wheels to run,  
And speed my journey to redeem my son?’

The sons their father’s wretched age revere,  
Forgive his anger, and produce the car.  
High on the seat the cabinet they bind:  
The new-made car with solid beauty shined;  
Box was the yoke, emboss’d with costly pains,  
And hung with ringlets to receive the reins;  
Nine cubits long, the traces swept the ground:  
These to the chariot’s polish’d pole they bound,  
Then fix’d a ring the running reins to guide,  
And close beneath the gather’d ends were tied.  
Next with the gifts (the price of Hector slain)  
The sad attendants load the groaning wain:  
Last to the yoke the well-match’d mules they bring  
(The gift of Mysia to the Trojan king).  
But the fair horses, long his darling care,  
Himself received, and harness’d to his car:  
Grieved as he was, he not this task denied;  
The hoary herald help’d him, at his side.

While careful these the gentle coursers join'd,  
Sad Hecuba approach'd with anxious mind;  
A golden bowl that foam'd with fragrant wine  
(Libation destined to the power divine)  
Held in her right, before the steeds she stands,  
And thus consigns it to the monarch's hands—

‘Take this, and pour to Jove; that safe from harms  
His grace restore thee to our roof and arms.  
Since victor of thy fears, and slighting mine,  
Heaven, or thy soul, inspire this bold design;  
Pray to that god, who high on Ida's brow  
Surveys thy desolated realms below,  
His winged messenger to send from high,  
And lead thy way with heavenly augury:  
Let the strong sovereign of the plomy race  
Tower on the right of you ethereal space.  
That sign beheld, and strengthen'd from above,  
Boldly pursue the journey mark'd by Jove;  
But if the god his augury denies,  
Suppress thy impulse, nor reject advice.’

‘Tis just (said Priam) to the sire above  
To raise our hands; for who so good as Jove?’  
He spoke, and bade the attendant handmaid bring  
The purest water of the living spring:  
(Her ready hands the ewer and basin held)  
Then took the golden cup his queen had fill'd;  
On the mid pavement pours the rosy wine,  
Uplifts his eyes, and calls the power divine:

‘O first and greatest! heaven's imperial lord!  
On lofty Ida's holy hill adored!  
To stern Achilles now direct my ways,  
And teach him mercy when a father prays.  
If such thy will, dispatch from yonder sky  
Thy sacred bird, celestial augury!

Let the strong sovereign of the plumy race  
Tower on the right of yon ethereal space:  
So shall thy suppliant, strengthen'd from above,  
Fearless pursue the journey mark'd by Jove.'

Jove heard his prayer, and from the throne on  
Dispatch'd his bird, celestial angury! [high  
The swift-wing'd chaser of the feather'd game,  
And known to gods by Percnos' lofty name.  
Wide as appears some palace-gate display'd,  
So broad, his pinions stretch'd their ample shade,  
As stooping dexter with resounding wings  
The' imperial bird descends in airy rings.  
A dawn of joy in every face appears;  
The mourning matron dries her timorous tears:  
Swift on the car the' impatient monarch sprung;  
The brazen portal in his passage rung;  
The mules preceding draw the loaded wain,  
Charged with the gifts: Idæus holds the rein:  
The king himself his gentle steeds controls,  
And through surrounding friends the chariot rolls.  
On his slow wheels the following people wait,  
Mourn at each step, and give him up to Fate;  
With hands uplifted, eye him as he pass'd,  
And gaze upon him as they gazed their last.  
Now forward fares the father on his way,  
Through the lone fields, and back to Ilion they.  
Great Jove beheld him as he cross'd the plain,  
And felt the woes of miserable man. [cares  
Then thus to Hermes—‘ Thou, whose constant  
Still succour mortals, and attend their prayers,  
Behold an object to thy charge consign'd:  
If ever pity touch'd thee for mankind,  
Go, guard the sire; the' observing foe prevent,  
And safe conduct him to Achilles' tent.’

The god obeys, his golden pinions binds,  
And mounts incumbent on the wings of winds,  
That high, through fields of air, his flight sustain,  
O'er the wide earth, and o'er the boundless main;  
Then grasps the wand that causes sleep to fly,  
Or in soft slumbers seals the wakeful eye:  
Thus arm'd, swift Hermes steers his airy way,  
And stoops on Hellespont's resounding sea.  
A beauteous youth, majestic and divine,  
He seem'd; fair offspring of some princely line!  
Now twilight veil'd the glaring face of day,  
And clad the dusky fields in sober gray;  
What time the herald and the hoary king  
(Their chariots stopping at the silver spring,  
That circling Ilus' ancient marble flows)  
Allow'd their mules and steeds a short repose.  
Through the dim shade the herald first espies  
A man's approach, and thus to Priam cries—  
‘ I mark some foe's advance: O king! beware;  
This hard adventure claims thy utmost care:  
For, much I fear, destruction hovers nigh:  
Our state asks counsel; Is it best to fly?  
Or, old and helpless, at his feet to fall,  
Two wretched suppliants, and for mercy call?’

The afflicted monarch shiver'd with despair;  
Pale grew his face, and upright stood his hair;  
Sunk was his heart; his colour went and came;  
A sudden trembling shook his aged frame:  
When Hermes, greeting, touch'd his royal hand,  
And, gentle, thus accosts with kind demand—

‘ Say whither, father! when each mortal sight  
Is seal'd in sleep, thou wander'st through the night?  
Why roam thy mules and steeds the plains along,  
Through Grecian foes, so numerous and so strong?’

What couldst thou hope, should these thy treasures view;

These, who with endless hate thy race pursue?  
For what defence, alas! couldst thou provide;  
Thyself not young, a weak old man thy guide?  
Yet suffer not thy soul to sink with dread;  
From me no harm shall touch thy reverend head;  
From Greece I'll guard thee too; for in those lines  
The living image of my father shines.'

‘Thy words, that speak benevolence of mind,  
Are true, my son! (the godlike sire rejoin'd)  
Great are my hazards; but the gods survey  
My steps, and send thee, guardian of my way.  
Hail, and be bless'd! For scarce of mortal kind  
Appear thy form, thy feature, and thy mind.’

‘Nor true are all thy words, nor erring wide  
(The sacred messenger of Heaven replied);  
But say, convey'st thou through the lonely plains  
What yet most precious of thy store remains,  
To lodge in safety with some friendly hand:  
Prepared, perchance, to leave thy native land?  
Or fly'st thou now?—What hopes can Troy retain,  
Thy matchless son, her guard and glory, slain?’

The king, alarm'd—‘Say what, and whence  
thou art,  
Who search the sorrows of a parent's heart,  
And know so well how godlike Hector died?’  
Thus Priam spoke, and Hermes thus replied—

‘You tempt me, father, and with pity touch:  
On this sad subject you inquire too much.  
Oft have these eyes that godlike Hector view'd  
In glorious fight, with Grecian blood imbrued:  
I saw him when, like Jove, his flames he toss'd  
On thousand ships, and wither'd half a host:

I saw, but help'd not: stern Achilles' ire  
Forbade assistance, and enjoy'd the fire.  
For him I serve, of Myrmidonian race;  
One ship convey'd us from our native place;  
Polyctor is my sire, an honour'd name,  
Old like thyself, and not unknown to fame;  
Of seven his sons, by whom the lot was cast  
To serve our prince, it fell on me the last.  
To watch this quarter, my adventure falls:  
For with the morn the Greeks attack your walls;  
Sleepless they sit, impatient to engage,  
And scarce their rulers check their martial rage.'

‘ If then thou art of stern Pelides' train  
(The mournful monarch thus rejoin'd again),  
Ah tell me truly, where, oh! where are laid  
My son's dear relics? what befalls him dead?  
Have dogs dismember'd (on the naked plains),  
Or yet unmangled rest, his cold remains?’

‘ O favour'd of the skies! (thus answer'd then  
The power that mediates between gods and men)  
Nor dogs nor vultures have thy Hector rent,  
But whole he lies, neglected in the tent:  
This the twelfth evening since he rested there,  
Untouch'd by worms, untainted by the air.  
Still as Aurora's ruddy beam is spread,  
Round his friend's tomb Achilles drags the dead:  
Yet undisfigured, or in limb or face,  
All fresh he lies, with every living grace,  
Majestical in death! No stains are found  
O'er all the corpse, and closed is every wound;  
Though many a wound they gave. Some heavenly  
Some hand divine, preserves him ever fair: [care,  
Or all the host of heaven, to whom he led  
A life so grateful, still regard him dead.’

Thus spoke to Priam the celestial guide,  
And joyful thus the royal sire replied—  
‘ Bless’d is the man who pays the gods above  
The constant tribute of respect and love!  
Those who inhabit the Olympian bower  
My son forgot not, in exalted power;  
And Heaven, that every virtue bears in mind,  
E’en to the ashes of the just is kind.  
But thou, O generous youth! this goblet take,  
A pledge of gratitude for Hector’s sake;  
And while the favouring gods our steps survey,  
Safe to Pelides’ tent conduct my way.’

To whom the latent god—‘ O king, forbear  
To tempt my youth, for apt is youth to err:  
But can I, absent from my prince’s sight,  
Take gifts in secret, that must shun the light?  
What from our master’s interest thus we draw,  
Is but a licensed theft that scapes the law.  
Respecting him, my soul abjures the’ offence;  
And as the crime, I dread the consequence.  
Thee, far as Argos, pleased I could convey;  
Guard of thy life, and partner of thy way:  
On thee attend, thy safety to maintain,  
O’er pathless forests, or the roaring main.’

He said, then took the chariot at a bound,  
And snatch’d the reins, and whirl’d the lash around;  
Before the’ inspiring god that urged them on,  
The coursers fly, with spirit not their own.  
And now they reach’d the naval walls, and found  
The guards repasting, while the bowls go round;  
On these the virtue of his wand he tries,  
And pours deep slumber on their watchful eyes:  
Then heaved the massy gates, removed the bars,  
And o’er the trenches led the rolling cars.

Unseen, through all the hostile camp they went,  
And now approach'd Pelides' lofty tent.  
On firs the roof was raised, and cover'd o'er  
With reeds collected from the marshy shore;  
And, fenced with palisades, a hall of state  
(The work of soldiers), where the hero sat.  
Large was the door, whose well-compact'd  
strength

A solid pine-tree barr'd, of wondrous length;  
Scarce three strong Greeks could lift its mighty  
But great Achilles singly closed the gate. [weight,  
This Hermes (such the power of gods) set wide;  
Then swift alighted the celestial guide,  
And thus reveal'd—‘ Hear, prince! and understand  
Thou owest thy guidance to no mortal hand:  
Hermes I am, descended from above,  
The king of arts, the messenger of Jove.  
Farewell: to shun Achilles' sight I fly;  
Uncommon are such favours of the sky,  
Nor stand confess'd to frail mortality.  
Now fearless enter, and prefer thy prayers;  
Adjure him by his father's silver hairs,  
His son, his mother! urge him to bestow  
Whatever pity that stern heart can know.’

Thus having said, he vanish'd from his eyes,  
And in a moment shot into the skies:  
The king, confirm'd from Heaven, alighted there,  
And left his aged herald on the car.  
With solemn pace through various rooms he went,  
And found Achilles in his inner tent:  
There sat the hero; Alcimus the brave,  
And great Automedon, attendance gave:  
These served his person at the royal feast;  
Around, at awful distance, stood the rest.

Unseen by these, the king his entry made;  
And, prostrate now before Achilles laid,  
Sudden (a venerable sight!) appears;  
Embraced his knees, and bathed his hands in tears;  
Those direful hands his kisses press'd, imbrued  
E'en with the best, the dearest of his blood!

As when a wretch (who, conscious of his crime,  
Pursued for murder, flies his native clime)  
Just gains some frontier, breathless, pale, amazed,  
All gaze, all wonder; thus Achilles gazed:  
Thus stood the attendants stupid with surprise;  
All mute, yet seem'd to question with their eyes;  
Each look'd on other, none the silence broke,  
Till thus at last the kingly suppliant spoke—

‘Ah think, thou favour'd of the powers divine!  
Think of thy father's age, and pity mine!  
In me that father's reverend image trace,  
Those silver hairs, that venerable face;  
His trembling limbs, his helpless person, see!  
In all my equal, but in misery!  
Yet now, perhaps, some turn of human fate  
Expels him helpless from his peaceful state;  
Think, from some powerful foe thou seest him fly,  
And beg protection with a feeble cry.  
Yet still one comfort in his soul may rise;  
He hears his son still lives to glad his eyes;  
And, hearing, still may hope a better day  
May send him thee, to chase that foe away.  
No comfort to my griefs, no hopes remain,  
The best, the bravest, of my sons are slain!  
Yet what a race! ere Greece to Ilion came,  
The pledge of many a loved and loving dame:  
Nineteen one mother bore—Dead, all are dead!  
How oft, alas! has wretched Priam bled!

Still one was left, their loss to recompense;  
 His father's hope, his country's last defence.  
 Him too thy rage has slain! beneath thy steel,  
 Unhappy, in his country's cause he fell!

‘ For him through hostile camps I bent my way,  
 For him thus prostrate at thy feet I lay;  
 Large gifts proportion'd to thy wrath I bear;  
 O hear the wretched, and the gods revere!

‘ Think of thy father, and this face behold!  
 See him in me, as helpless and as old!  
 Though not so wretched: there he yields to me,  
 The first of men in sovereign misery!  
 Thus forced to kneel, thus groveling to embrace  
 The scourge and ruin of my realm and race:  
 Suppliant my children's murderer to implore,  
 And kiss those hands yet reeking with their gore!’

These words soft pity in the chief inspire,  
 Touch'd with the dear remembrance of his sire.  
 Then with his hand (as prostrate still he lay)  
 The old man's cheek he gently turn'd away.  
 Now each by turns indulged the gush of woe;  
 And now the mingled tides together flow:  
 This low on earth, that gently bending o'er,  
 A father one, and one a son, deplore:  
 But great Achilles different passions rend,  
 And now his sire he mourns, and now his friend.  
 The infectious softness through the heroes ran;  
 One universal solemn shower began;  
 They bore as heroes, but they felt as man.

Satiate at length with unavailing woes,  
 From the high throne divine Achilles rose;  
 The reverend monarch by the hand he raised;  
 On his white beard and form majestic gazed,  
 Not unrelenting; then serene began  
 With words to sooth the miserable man:

‘ Alas, what weight of anguish hast thou known !  
Unhappy prince ! thus guardless and alone  
To pass through foes, and thus undaunted face  
The man whose fury has destroy’d thy race !  
Heaven sure has arm’d thee with a heart of steel,  
A strength proportion’d to the woes you feel.  
Rise then : let reason mitigate our care :  
To mourn, avails not : man is born to bear.  
Such is, alas ! the gods’ severe decree :  
They, only they are bless’d, and only free.  
Two urns by Jove’s high throne have ever stood,  
The source of evil one, and one of good ;  
From thence the cup of mortal man he fills,  
Blessings to these, to those distributes ills ;  
To most, he mingles both : the wretch deereed  
To taste the bad, unmix’d, is cursed indeed ;  
Pursued by wrongs, by meagre famine driven,  
He wanders, outcast both of earth and heaven.  
The happiest taste not happiness sincere ;  
But find the cordial draught is dash’d with care.  
Who more than Peleus shone in wealth and power !  
What stars concurring bless’d his natal hour !  
A realm, a goddess, to his wishes given ;  
Graced by the gods with all the gifts of heaven.  
One evil, yet, o’ertakes his latest day :  
No race succeeding to imperial sway ;  
An only son ; and he, alas ! ordain’d  
To fall untimely in a foreign land.  
See him, in Troy, the pious care decline  
Of his weak age, to live the curse of thine !  
Thou too, old man, hast happier days beheld ;  
In riches once, in children once, excell’d ;  
Extended Phrygia own’d thy ample reign,  
And all fair Lesbos’ blissful seats contain,  
And all wide Hellespont’s unmeasured main.

But since the god his hand has pleased to turn,  
And fill thy measure from his bitter urn,  
What sees the sun, but hapless heroes' falls?  
War, and the blood of men, surround thy walls!  
What must be, must be. Bear thy lot, nor shed  
These unavailing sorrows o'er the dead;  
Thou canst not call him from the Stygian shore,  
But thou, alas! mayst live to suffer more!"

To whom the king—"O favour'd of the skies!  
Here let me grow to earth! since Hector lies  
On the bare beach deprived of obsequies.  
Oh, give me Hector! to my eyes restore  
His corpse, and take the gifts: I ask no more.  
Thou, as thou mayst, these boundless stores enjoy;  
Safe may'st thou sail, and turn thy wrath from Troy;  
So shall thy pity and forbearance give  
A weak old man to see the light and live!"

'Move me no more (Achilles thus replies,  
While kindling anger sparkled in his eyes),  
Nor seek by tears my steady soul to bend:  
To yield thy Hector I myself intend:  
For know, from Jove my goddess-mother came,  
(Old Ocean's daughter, silver-footed dame),  
Nor comest thou but by heaven; nor comest alone,  
Some god impels with courage not thy own:  
No human hand the weighty gates unbarr'd,  
Nor could the boldest of our youth have dared  
To pass our outworks, or elude the guard.  
Cease; lest neglectful of high Jove's command,  
I show thee, king! thou tread'st on hostile land;  
Release my knees, thy suppliant arts give o'er,  
And shake the purpose of my soul no more.'

The sire obey'd him, trembling and o'erawed.  
Achilles, like a lion, rush'd abroad:

Automedon and Aleimus attend  
(Whom most he honour'd, since he lost his friend),  
These to unyoke the mules and horses went,  
And led the hoary herald to the tent;  
Next, heap'd on high, the numerous presents bear  
(Great Hector's ransom) from the polish'd car.  
Two splendid mantles, and a carpet spread,  
They leave; to cover, and inwrap the dead.  
Then call the handmaids, with assistant toil  
To wash the body and anoint with oil,  
Apart from Priam; lest the unhappy sire,  
Provoked to passion, once more rouse to ire  
The stern Pelides; and nor sacred age,  
Nor Jove's command, should check the rising rage.  
This done, the garments o'er the corpse they  
Achilles lifts it to the funeral bed: [spread;  
Then, while the body on the car they laid,  
He groans, and calls on loved Patroclus' shade:

‘If, in that gloom which never light must know,  
The deeds of mortals touch the ghosts below,  
O friend! forgive me, that I thus fulfil  
(Restoring Hector) Heaven's unquestion'd will.  
The gifts the father gave, be ever thine,  
To grace thy manes, and adorn thy shrine.’

He said, and, entering, took his seat of state,  
Where full before him reverend Priam sat;  
To whom, composed, the godlike chief begun—  
‘Lo! to thy prayer restored, thy breathless son;  
Extended on the funeral couch he lies;  
And soon as morning paints the eastern skies,  
The sight is granted to thy longing eyes:  
But now the peaceful hours of sacred night  
Demand refection, and to rest invite:

Nor thou, O father! thus consumed with woe,  
The common cares that nourish life forego.  
Not thus did Niobè, of form divine,  
A parent once, whose sorrows equal'd thine:  
Six youthful sons, as many blooming maids,  
In one sad day beheld the Stygian shades;  
Those by Apollo's silver bow were slain,  
These, Cynthia's arrows stretch'd upon the plain:  
So was her pride chastised by wrath divine,  
Who match'd her own with bright Latona's line;  
But two the goddess, twelve the queen enjoy'd;  
Those boasted twelve the avenging two destroy'd.  
Steep'd in their blood, and in the dust outspread,  
Nine days, neglected, lay exposed the dead;  
None by to weep them, to inhume them none  
(For Jove had turn'd the nation all to stone);  
The gods themselves, at length relenting, gave  
The unhappy race the honours of a grave.  
Herself a rock (for such was Heaven's high will),  
Through deserts wild now pours a weeping rill;  
Where round the bed whence Acheloüs springs,  
The watery fairies dance in mazy rings;  
There high on Sipylus's shaggy brow,  
She stands her own sad monument of woe;  
The rock for ever lasts, the tears for ever flow.

‘ Such griefs, O king! have other parents known;  
Remember theirs, and mitigate thy own.  
The care of Heaven thy Hector has appear'd,  
Nor shall he lie unwept, and uninterr'd;  
Soon may thy aged cheeks in tears be drown'd,  
And all the eyes of Ilion stream around.’

He said, and, rising, chose the victim ewe  
With silver fleece, which his attendants slew.

The limbs they sever from the reeking hide,  
With skill prepare them, and in parts divide:  
Each on the coals the separate morsels lays,  
And, hasty, snatches from the rising blaze.  
With bread the glittering canisters they load,  
Which round the board Automedon bestow'd.  
The chief himself to each his portion placed,  
And each indulging shared in sweet repast.  
When now the rage of hunger was repress'd,  
The wondering hero eyes his royal guest:  
No less the royal guest the hero eyes,  
His godlike aspect and majestic size;  
Here, youthful grace and noble fire engage;  
And there, the mild benevolence of age.  
Thus gazing long, the silence neither broke,  
(A solemn scene!) at length the father spoke:

‘ Permit me now, beloved of Jove! to steep  
My careful temples in the dew of sleep:  
For, since the day that number'd with the dead  
My hapless son, the dust has been my bed;  
Soft sleep a stranger to my weeping eyes;  
My only food, my sorrows and my sighs!  
Till now, encouraged by the grace you give,  
I share thy banquet, and consent to live.’

With that, Achilles bade prepare the bed,  
With purple soft, and shaggy carpets spread;  
Forth, by the flaming lights, they bend their way,  
And place the couches, and the coverings lay.  
Then he—‘ Now, father, sleep, but sleep not here;  
Consult thy safety, and forgive my fear,  
Lest any Argive at this hour awake,  
To ask our counsel, or our orders take,  
Approaching sudden to our open'd tent,  
Perchance behold thee, and our grace prevent.

Should such report thy honour'd person here,  
The king of men the ransom might defer:  
But say with speed, if aught of thy desire  
Remains unask'd; what time the rites require  
To inter thy Hector? For, so long we stay  
Our slaughtering arm, and bid the hosts obey.'

‘ If then thy will permit (the monarch said)  
To finish all due honours to the dead,  
This of thy grace accord: to thee are known  
The fears of Ilion, closed within her town;  
And at what distance from our walls aspire  
The hills of Ide, and forests for the fire.  
Nine days to vent our sorrows I request,  
The tenth shall see the funeral and the feast;  
The next, to raise his monument be given;  
The twelfth we war, if war be doom'd by Heaven! ’

‘ This thy request (replied the chief) enjoy:  
Till then our arms suspend the fall of Troy.’

Then gave his hand at parting, to prevent  
The old man's fears, and turn'd within the tent;  
Where fair Briseis, bright in blooming charms,  
Expects her hero with desiring arms.  
But in the porch the king and herald rest;  
Sad dreams of care yet wandering in their breast.  
Now gods and men the gifts of sleep partake;  
Industrious Hermes only was awake,  
The king's return revolving in his mind,  
To pass the ramparts, and the watch to blind.  
The power descending hover'd o'er his head—  
‘ And sleep'st thou, father! (thus the vision said)  
Now dost thou sleep, when Hector is restored?  
Nor fear the Grecian foes, or Grecian lord?  
Thy presence here should stern Atrides see,  
Thy still surviving sons may sue for thee,

May offer all thy treasures yet contain,  
To spare thy age ; and offer all in vain.'

Waked with the word, the trembling sire arose,  
And raised his friend : the god before him goes,  
He joins the mules, directs them with his hand,  
And moves in silence through the hostile land.  
When now to Xanthus' yellow stream they drove  
(Xanthus, immortal progeny of Jove),  
The winged deity forsook their view,  
And in a moment to Olympus flew.  
Now shed Aurora round her saffron ray,  
Sprung through the gates of light, and gave the day :  
Charged with the mournful load, to Ilion go  
The sage and king, majestically slow.  
Cassandra first beholds, from Ilion's spire,  
The sad procession of her hoary sire ;  
Then, as the pensive pomp advanced more near  
(Her breathless brother stretch'd upon the bier),  
A shower of tears o'erflows her beauteous eyes,  
Alarming thus all Ilion with her cries—

‘ Turn here your steps, and here your eyes employ,  
Ye wretched daughters, and ye sons, of Troy !  
If e'er ye rush'd in crowds, with vast delight,  
To hail your hero glorious from the fight,  
Now meet him dead, and let your sorrows flow !  
Your common triumph, and your common woe.’

In thronging crowds they issue to the plains ;  
Nor man, nor woman, in the walls remains ;  
In every face the selfsame grief is shown ;  
And Troy sends forth one universal groan.  
At Sceæa's gates they meet the mourning wain,  
Hang on the wheels, and grovel round the slain.  
The wife, and mother, frantic with despair,  
Kiss his pale cheek, and rend their scatter'd hair :

Thus wildly wailing, at the gates they lay;  
And there had sigh'd and sorrow'd out the day;  
But godlike Priam from the chariot rose:  
' Forbear (he cried) this violence of woes,  
First to the palace let the car proceed,  
Then pour your boundless sorrows o'er the dead.'

The waves of people at his word divide,  
Slow rolls the chariot through the following tide;  
E'en to the palace the sad pomp they wait:  
They weep, and place him on the bed of state.  
A melancholy choir attend around,  
With plaintive sighs, and music's solemn sound:  
Alternately they sing, alternate flow  
The' obedient tears, melodious in their woe.  
While deeper sorrows groan from each full heart,  
And nature speaks at every pause of art.

First to the corpse the weeping consort flew;  
Around his neck her milkwhite arms she threw,  
And, 'Oh, my Hector! Oh, my lord! (she cries,)  
Snatch'd in thy bloom from these desiring eyes!  
Thou to the dismal realms for ever gone!  
And I abandon'd, desolate, alone!  
An only son, once comfort of our pains,  
Sad product now of hapless love, remains!  
Never to manly age that son shall rise,  
Or with increasing graces glad my eyes:  
For Ilion now (her great defender slain)  
Shall sink a smoking ruin on the plain.  
Who now protects her wives with guardian care?  
Who saves her infants from the raging war?  
Now hostile fleets must waft those infants o'er  
(Those wives must wait them) to a foreign shore!  
Thou too, my son! to barbarous climes shalt go,  
The sad companion of thy mother's woe;

Driven hence a slave before the victor's sword;  
Condemn'd to toil for some inhuman lord :  
Or else some Greek whose father press'd the plain,  
Or son, or brother, by great Hector slain,  
In Hector's blood his vengeance shall enjoy,  
And hurl thee headlong from the towers of Troy.  
For thy stern father never spared a foe :  
Thence all these tears, and all this scene of woe !  
Thence, many evils his sad parents bore,  
His parents many, but his consort more.  
Why gavest thou not to me thy dying hand ?  
And why received not I thy last command ? [dear,  
Some word thou wouldest have spoke, which, sadly  
My soul might keep, or utter with a tear ;  
Which never, never could be lost in air,  
Fix'd in my heart, and oft repeated there !']

Thus to her weeping maids she makes her moan ;  
Her weeping handmaids echo groan for groan.

The mournful mother next sustains her part :  
' O thou, the best, the dearest to my heart !  
Of all my race thou most by Heaven approved,  
And by the' immortals e'en in death beloved !  
While all my other sons in barbarous bands  
Achilles bound, and sold to foreign lands,  
This felt no chains, but went a glorious ghost,  
Free, and a hero, to the Stygian coast.  
Sentenced, 'tis true, by his inhuman doom,  
Thy noble corse was dragg'd around the tomb  
(The tomb of him thy warlike arm had slain);  
Ungenerous insult, impotent and vain !  
Yet glow'st thou fresh with every living grace ;  
No mark of pain, or violence of face ;  
Rosy and fair ! as Phœbus' silver bow  
Dismiss'd thee gently to the shades below.'

Thus spoke the dame, and melted into tears.  
Sad Helen next in pomp of grief appears;  
Fast from the shining sluices of her eyes  
Fall the round crystal drops, while thus she cries—

‘ Ah, dearest friend! in whom the gods had join’d  
The mildest manners with the bravest mind;  
Now twice ten years (unhappy years) are o’er  
Since Paris brought me to the Trojan shore;  
(O had I perish’d, ere that form divine  
Seduced this soft, this easy heart of mine!)  
Yet was it ne’er my fate, from thee to find  
A deed ungentle, or a word unkind:  
When others cursed the authoress of their woe,  
Thy pity check’d my sorrows in their flow:  
If some proud brother eyed me with disdain,  
Or scornful sister with her sweeping train,  
Thy gentle accents soften’d all my pain.  
For thee I mourn; and mourn myself in thee,  
The wretched source of all this misery!  
The fate I caused, for ever I bemoan;  
Sad Helen has no friend, now thou art gone!  
Through Troy’s wide streets abandon’d shall I  
roam!

In Troy deserted, as abhorr’d at home!’

So spoke the fair, with sorrow-streaming eye:  
Distressful beauty melts each stander-by:  
On all around the’ infectious sorrow grows;  
But Priam check’d the torrent as it rose:  
‘ Perform, ye Trojans! what the rites require,  
And fell the forests for a funeral pyre;  
Twelve days, nor foes nor secret ambush dread;  
Achilles grants these honours to the dead.’

He spoke; and, at his word, the Trojan train  
Their mules and oxen harness to the wain,

Pour through the gates, and, fell'd from Ida's  
crown,

Roll back the gather'd forests to the town.  
These toils continue nine succeeding days,  
And high in air a silvan structure raise.  
But when the tenth fair morn began to shine,  
Forth to the pile was borne the man divine,  
And placed aloft; while all, with streaming eyes,  
Beheld the flames and rolling smokes arise.  
Soon as Aurora, daughter of the dawn,  
With rosy lustre streak'd the dewy lawn,  
Again the mournful crowds surround the pyre,  
And quench with wine the yet remaining fire.  
The snowy bones his friends and brothers place  
(With tears collected) in a golden vase;  
The golden vase in purple palls they roll'd,  
Of softest texture, and inwrought with gold.  
Last o'er the urn the sacred earth they spread,  
And raised the tomb, memorial of the dead.  
(Strong guards and spies, till all the rites were done,  
Watch'd from the rising to the setting sun:)  
All Troy then moves to Priam's court again,  
A solemn, silent, melancholy train:  
Assembled there, from pious toil they rest,  
And sadly shared the last sepulchral feast.  
Such honours Ilion to her hero paid,  
And peaceful slept the mighty Hector's shade,

CONCLUDING NOTE.

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WE have now passed through the *Iliad*, and seen the anger of Achilles, and the terrible effects of it, at an end: as that only was the subject of the poem, and the nature of epic poetry would not permit our author to proceed to the event of the war, it may perhaps be acceptable to the common reader to give a short account of what happened to Troy and the chief actors in this poem, after the conclusion of it.

I need not mention that Troy was taken soon after the death of Hector, by the stratagem of the wooden horse, the particulars of which are described by Virgil in the second book of the *Aeneis*.

Achilles fell before Troy, by the hand of Paris, by the shot of an arrow in his heel, as Hector had prophesied at his death, lib. xxii.

The unfortunate Priam was killed by Pyrrhus, the son of Achilles.

Ajax, after the death of Achilles, had a contest with Ulysses for the armour of Vulcan; but being defeated in his aim, he slew himself through indignation.

Helen, after the death of Paris, married Deiphobus his brother, and at the taking of Troy betrayed him, in order to reconcile herself to Menelaüs her first husband, who received her again into favour.

Agamemnon at his return was barbarously murdered by *Ægysthus*, at the instigation of Clytemnestra his wife, who in his absence had dishonoured his bed with *Ægysthus*.

Diomed, after the fall of Troy, was expelled his own country, and scarce escaped with his life from his adulterous wife *Ægiale*: but at last was received by Daunus in Apulia, and shared his kingdom: it is uncertain how he died.

Nestor lived in peace with his children, in Pylos, his native country.

Ulysses also, after innumerable troubles by sea and land, at last returned in safety to Ithaca, which is the subject of Homer's *Odyssey*.

For what remains, I beg to be excused from the ceremonies of taking leave at the end of my work; and from embarrassing myself, or others, with any defences or apologies about it. But instead of endeavouring to raise a vain monument to myself, of the merits or difficulties of it (which must be left to the world, to truth, and to posterity), let me leave behind me a memorial of my friendship with one of the most valuable of men, as well as finest writers, of my age and country: one who has tried, and knows by his own experience, how hard an undertaking it is to do justice to Homer: and one who (I am sure) sincerely rejoices with me at the period of

my labours. To him therefore, having brought this long work to a conclusion, I desire to dedicate it; and to have the honour and satisfaction of placing together, in this manner, the names of MR. CONGREVE, and of

A. POPE.

March 25, 1720.

END OF VOL. LXXVII.



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